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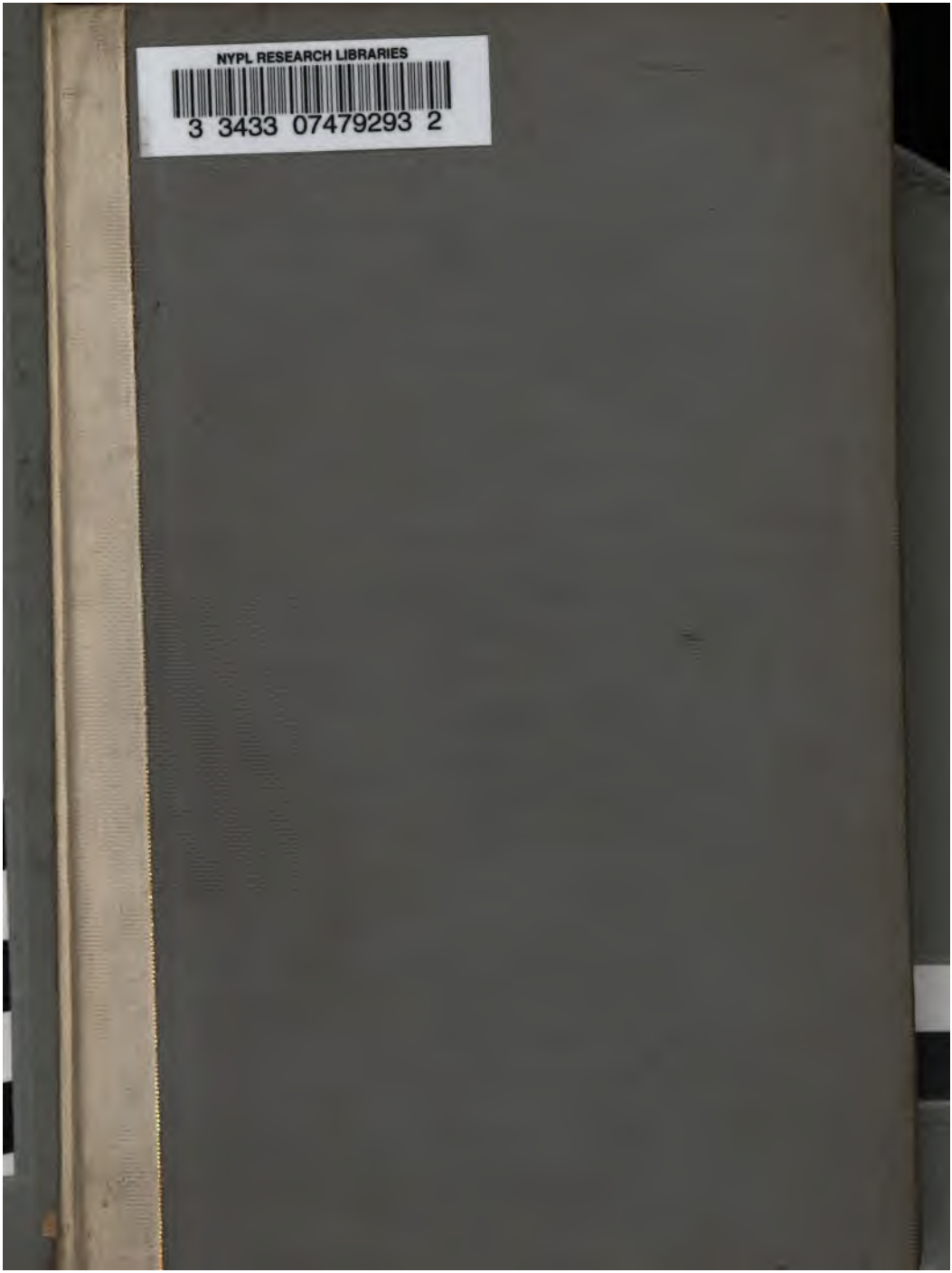
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Memorial

of

Lydia Lorraine Wheeler

1840-1902

NEW YORK
The Knickerbocker Press
1902

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Wheeler Memorial

LYDIA LORRAINE HODGES was born at Chester, Vt., on the eleventh day of August, 1840. Her mother's mother was Lydia Loraine Brewster, who was descended from Elder Brewster of the *Mayflower*. Her father, Silas Henry Hodges, was the son of Judge Hodges, and her mother was the daughter of Judge Fay, both of Rutland County. Her father's sister married Solomon Foot, who for many years represented Vermont in the United States Senate. Lydia was a great favorite of this uncle, and I have often thought she learned from him how to unite strong feelings with moderation and self-restraint in their expression. This was characteristic of her, as it had been of him. From the beginning of his term in the Senate, Mr. Foot was one of the anti-slavery leaders. Yet, when presiding over the Senate, he showed such judicial impartiality that Jeff. Davis, who was his personal friend, said to him once: "Mr. Foot, if they would elect you President of the United States, we

would submit the whole question between the North and South to you for your decision."

When fourteen years of age, Lydia was taken by the Panama route to San Francisco. The railroad across the Isthmus was then unfinished and passengers rode on mules across the gap, protected by ponchos from the tropical storms. In San Francisco she spent nearly three years with her uncle, Judge Waller, who was Recorder of that city. She was there in 1856, during the stirring times of the Vigilance Committee. Those days of storm and stress developed young people early. I have often heard her relate how, on the memorable Sunday, when the good citizens of San Francisco took the government into their own hands, at a concerted signal, the men filed one by one out of the church where they were assembled, and left it to the minister and women and children. Nothing is more characteristic of the real American type than the perfect order and dignity with which the good citizens effected that peaceable revolution, and wrested the government from the hands of the scoundrels who had stepped into it while honest men were busy with their private affairs.

I wish I could retrace the charming picture which Lydia could draw of some of the Spanish families of San Francisco among whom she found friends.

She returned east in 1857. By this time the Panama Railroad was finished across the Isthmus. One incident of her return voyage by sea

from San Francisco to Panama deserves notice. The captain, in order to exercise his crew, gave an alarm of fire in the night. The passengers, affrighted, rushed into the saloon—all but Lydia and her room-mate, who remained quietly in their cabin. When the captain asked how she had the fortitude to act thus, she replied: "There was nothing I could do, and I preferred to meet the danger calmly."

She went to the Rutland High School and to Mrs. Worcester's at Burlington. That was a famous school, as notable in Vermont in those days as Miss Porter's at Farmington was in Connecticut. It was there she formed that friendship with the family of President Wheeler, my uncle, and with Mrs. E. M. Phelps, which lasted through life.

At the beginning of the Civil War her father was appointed to preside over the new Board of Appeals, which was established in the Patent Office; and there he served the country with the greatest skill and fidelity until his death in 1875. He removed his home from Rutland to Washington, and Lydia was there during a large part of the war. There she learned to know and revere Mr. Lincoln. She used to relate how he once, at a White House reception, trod on her gown with his great foot, and how she treasured the torn gown for years.

She was present on the Fourth of July at Rutland, when a somewhat gloomy and depressed celebration was turned into joy and

thanksgiving by a telegram announcing the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg and the retreat of the invading army. People wept on one another's shoulders and clapped their hands and shouted. And they sang *Old Hundred*, as we New Yorkers did in Wall Street when the news came of the taking of Richmond. Then somebody, to relieve the tension, bade the band play *The Rogues' March*. That was, indeed, a memorable Fourth of July, and, when the news came later of the surrender of Vicksburg, we all felt that the tide had turned and that sooner or later the Union would triumph. This had not been so clear after Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

The next summer Lydia and I met at Rock Point on Lake Champlain. A little later we were members of a party that ascended Mount Mansfield. On the 10th of December, 1865, we were engaged; and on the 22d of November, 1866, we were married at Rutland, Vt.

That spot was very dear to my wife. She had spent many happy days amid its beautiful hills and "up North" with friends of her girlhood—Emily Seaver, Mary Daniels, and Lizzie Green. Many were the walks and drives that my wife and I took in those days, and I learned to know Killington and Pico almost as well as I did Ascutney.

Some of her friends thought it strange that she, who had been brought up a Republican and a Congregationalist, should have loved a Democrat and an Episcopalian. I think that not only

party feeling, but sectarian prejudice ran higher in those days than it does now. At any rate these differences did not mar our happiness. We were in many respects the complement of each other, and were wise enough to appreciate each other's standpoint and training, and to see the good that was there. I can truly say that never, even in the days when I was most active in the Democratic party, did I receive anything but sympathy from my wife. Indeed, in the years that followed the election of General Grant, her mind naturally worked out for herself the same conclusions to which Lowell and Curtis and so many other Republicans of the old school came. As one of them said: "We have not left our party; our party has left us."

But I anticipate. We spent the first year of our married life at Mrs. Perry's, on the north side of Gramercy Park. In the summer of 1867, I bought the Schermerhorn House at the foot of 83d Street, on the bluff opposite Astoria on the East River. The big, old-fashioned house, with its square parlors, reminded the young wife of her father's house at Rutland. We had grounds about it, and had a big Russian bloodhound, who looked as fierce as he was really tame. And there we passed a real country winter, with snow in abundance. One day the horse-car lines which were our main reliance, were completely blockaded. We went to the old St. James Church, which stood near where the Normal College now is, and where there was still a shed

for horses on the Sunday. My brother-in-law, Rev. Cornelius B. Smith, was rector. We made friends with our neighbors, and would probably have lived there many years, but for a neighbor's cow.

This neighbor had been very intimate with the man from whom I bought my house, and used to pasture his cow on the lawn adjoining, tethered to a peg driven into the turf. My man, a loyal Irishman, thought the continuance of this practice an intrusion, and cut the rope. The cow wandered off, and the Gilseys had no milk for dinner. When I learned what had been done, I called on the great tobacconist and expressed regret that my man should have treated the cow so unceremoniously. But this did not heal the breach, and pretty soon Mr. Gilsey bought the land over which my road to 84th Street passed, and began to fence it in. And then my father (who was a lawyer and with whom I was in business) and I put our heads together, and I brought out all the learning I had acquired at Cambridge on the subject of rights of way, and we got an injunction against the fence. Judge Edmonds argued the case for us, and Henry L. Clinton was on the other side.

When the preliminary injunction was granted, I hastened home to serve it on the obstructors of my domestic peace. The head carpenter refused to regard the order of the Court, and I was obliged to assail and drive him off; while Lydia looked on from the parlor window. No police-

man ever came to our rural seclusion, and there was no time to be lost.

We won our suit. But it left very unpleasant associations behind it, and we sold the old house and the garden and all, and bought the little marble house, 265 Lexington Avenue. It was a great contrast to the big house where we began housekeeping. But we were very happy there. Annie Lorraine was born there in 1868.

That same year I bought a country place at New Hamburg, on the Hudson, and we spent our summers there. From our front porch and veranda we could see the Catskills and the Fishkill Mountains, as well as a long sweep of the Hudson and its valley. Many a drive did we take alone, or under the pilotage of Nicholas, a short and alert darky whom we had inherited from my predecessor, General Van Alen. Nicholas's wife, Nancy, kept house for us. She was taller and stouter than her husband, and was dignified enough to have been an African princess. They were both the descendants of slaves who had served the old manorial families of Dutchess County, and were very satisfactory to the young housekeeper, who had the true New England sense of the decencies of life.

In 1870, my father died. That made in some ways a great change in my life, for I inherited half his property. I had always looked up to him as a wise counsellor, and it was a strange thing for me to be thrown entirely on my own resources in business matters. Nevertheless, he

had always put me forward in court business, which he gave up soon after I came to the Bar; and I felt the need of his advice much more in the management of my private affairs than in that of my clients. My wife never showed her natural shrewdness and good sense more than she did then.

I was very fond of my father. While he was a widower, we lived together like two brothers. And my wife's sympathy and love were an inexpressible comfort to me when he died.

In 1871, Ethel Jarvis was born in the Lexington Avenue house. We had before decided to sell it, and Lydia, always alert, showed the house to the purchaser the very morning of that day.

In the fall of that year we bought the house 20 West 48th Street, which we owned until 1882. Mr. Godkin and my Law School classmate, Randolph Robinson, were then living on that block. William Kobbe, with his six tall sons and one daughter, lived opposite, and we formed a warm and delightful friendship with that family. They were all musical, and in their house we first heard the score of *Parsifal*.

During these years we had become attendants at Calvary Church, of which Dr. Washburn was rector. He was a preacher of real power and eloquence, and became a much valued friend to us both. Many a pleasant hour we passed in his library.

At New Hamburg we came to know well Bishop Satterlee, who was at first assistant and

afterwards rector of the church at Wappinger Falls. Mrs. Satterlee was a much valued friend of our family, both before and after my marriage, and our church relations were never more helpful or satisfactory than during the years when we spent our summers at New Hamburg.

In 1873, the commercial crisis came and left its mark everywhere in the United States. My property was mostly real estate, and the rents shrunk in many cases one half, while taxes and interest on mortgages remained the same. In 1874, my partner, John G. Vose, died, and the firm of McDaniel, Wheeler & Souther was formed. But professional income had not then made up for the diminution in my other receipts, and, in 1874 and 1875, I let my country seat and spent the summers at Rutland, with my wife's sister, Mrs. Dewey, in her father's old house. Very happy summers they were, both for us and for the children. David Everett was born in November, 1872, and Winifred Fay came to us at New Hamburg in 1874.

Meanwhile, another change in my affairs compelled economy in the management of my country place, or its sale. When I bought that place there was a hot-house on it for strawberries. The sale of these to Delmonico was profitable, and I built another, which was even more so. A beautiful and fragrant sight it was when these blossomed, often while the ground around was covered with snow. I got for years from three dollars to one dollar for each small

basket in which the berries were packed. But Southern competition brought the price down to fifty cents, and there was no money in hothouse cultivation at that price. The Constitution of my country did not permit a duty on strawberries from South Carolina to protect the people of New York from the cheap labor of that State, and I gave up the strawberry business. Relieved from that competition, strange as it may seem, the price went steadily down.

In 1876, my wife and I spent some days in Philadelphia, enjoying the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham and the Centennial. And in the fall of that year we gave up New Hamburg and took instead a house belonging to her uncle, George W. Hodges, at Clifton, Staten Island, where we spent three years. There Beatrice Mary was born in 1877, and Constance Fuller in 1879.

In the fall of the latter year I went to England on business, and my wife superintended the migration to our city house in 48th Street. There great sorrows came to us. After her father's death in 1875, my wife's mother and her daughter Annie came to live with us. Annie was one of those bright and gracious spirits who seem more of heaven than earth. She had a voice of exquisite quality. I can never forget her singing *The Brook* and other of Tennyson's songs that people in those days had taste enough to love. Without any premonition, Annie was attacked by consumption during that winter, and de-

parted from us in the spring. And in January, 1882, Beatrice, our fair-haired little daughter, was attacked by diphtheria and passed away in six days. During her illness and that of Winifred, who recovered, the other children were sent away, and my wife and I remained. Lydia was a most faithful and skilful nurse. Beatrice was a dainty little creature, and all the treatment of her disease was irksome to her and she had no desire to live. "With dear God," she said, and, almost as she said the words, she passed away.

This sickness has for me a strange association with my civil service work. My sense of justice had been greatly stirred by the political history of the country from 1876 to 1880, and a letter on the subject which I sent to *The Nation* led to my election as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the New York Civil Service Reform Association, a position which I held for fifteen years. In this capacity I went to Willimantic to organize an association there, leaving my family, as I supposed, in perfect health. On my return I found that they were scattered. Lydia had acted with her customary good sense and decision.

These two deaths filled the house, which had been so dear to us, with painful associations. My neighbors had built around our rear, cutting off our sunshine, and I felt it was no place for young children. So I sold it, and bought the house on the corner of Park Avenue and 71st Street, where we have lived for twenty years.

Under the guidance of Babb & Cook we rebuilt it, and made it just what we wanted, and a very happy home it proved. The children lived in the Park. For the summers we became pilgrims—giving up a fixed summer home. In this house, in 1891, we celebrated our silver wedding. In 1889, and again in 1897, we spent the summers in Europe. Three months of the latter year Lydia and the daughters had rooms in the Convents of the hospitable Augustine Sisters at Tours and Chinon, in Touraine, and a delightful experience it was.

Meanwhile, my wife's mother, after a lingering illness, passed away in 1887. And then, for the first time since our marriage, my wife felt that she could give to public charities a larger exercise of the skill and tact and patience that had been so long developing and finding their perfect work in home life. From 1885 to 1896, she was one of the "State Ladies," as they were called on the Island. Our Supreme Court has inherited from the English Chancellor jurisdiction over charities. Clothed with authority from that tribunal, and under the direction of the State Charities Aid Society, Mrs. Wheeler visited Randall's Island regularly and was the means of instituting important reforms in the management of the children there. She was an active member of the New York County Visiting Committee and was Chairman of the sub-Committee on the Randall's Island institutions. Her tales of the matron, Mrs. Dunphy,

who ruled with a rod of iron, and whose desire was to please the "State Ladies" but to have her own way every time, were most amusing. No one who did not know Mrs. Wheeler well can realize how keen was her sense of humor, and how thoroughly she enjoyed the comical side of human nature.

In this work she gained the friendship of Miss Rosalie Butler, that queen among the charity workers of New York, whose untimely death was deplored by so many. Such a union of masterfulness and sweetness, dignity and tenderness, is most rare.

Afterwards, and in 1896, Mrs. Wheeler became Chairman of the District Committee of the Charity Organization Society. Perhaps in no position in her life was her talent more effective. Her keen insight into character, her absolute sincerity of purpose, her sympathy, which was rarely led astray because of her unusual good sense, made her direction in this difficult work of aiding the poor of a great city to help themselves invaluable.

From 1893 to 1894 our third daughter, Winifred, was at Bryn Mawr College. The combination of hard study and social activity there, proved too much for her strength. She never regained her elasticity; and in the winter of 1895–96 she was attacked by typhoid fever and was taken from us in the last named year. This was one of the greatest griefs of our life, and I can never forget the sweetness and

patience with which my wife bore the strain of the long sickness and of the bereavement.

In June, 1898, our only son was married, and, in November of that year our eldest daughter. Grandchildren came, and the grandmother loved them tenderly. They added greatly to the happiness of her last years. Indeed, these were, I think, the happiest of her life.

In 1900, a shadow came upon it. At Stockbridge, where we spent the summer, she had an attack which warned her, and warned me, that there was danger of heart-failure. When I recall the incessant vigilance with which she had watched over the sick in our family, I cannot wonder that the heart had been overstrained. She took life very seriously, this little woman, and it was very difficult for her to cast off her burdens even for a time; and many things were a burden to her sensitive spirit that a coarser nature would have passed unnoticed.

But all the more for this reason did she relish the joys of life. She formed some intimate friendships during her last twenty years on earth that were very precious to her. I can only refer to the meetings of a few dear friends that occurred with more or less regularity at each other's houses, which none who took part in them can ever forget. And I, who only shared in these meetings through what I heard from others—I can never forget them.

Then the Wednesday Afternoon Club, which she joined in 1890, became a very pleasant part

of my wife's life, made up, as it was, of congenial spirits. The papers that were read, and the discussions that followed, were as choice and dainty as an Italian garden, with its ilex and nightingales, its roses and its orange trees. Some of the papers Mrs. Wheeler wrote for the Club are printed in this memorial.[1]

During these last twenty years we lived very near my sister. Her children and mine played together in Central Park, and Clarence Smith and our David were at school together at St. Paul's. And so it was natural that my wife, and, indeed, all of us, should take an especial interest in Clarence's marriage to Catharine Cook, which took place, January 14, 1902. My wife was as dainty and fastidious in her taste in dress as in everything else, and she was not always satisfied with the result of her labors. But on this occasion she was content. Many of her best and dearest friends were at the wedding. And they had many enquiries to make of my health. I had been very sick, and was recovering steadily. There seemed to be not a cloud in our sky, and as my children and our faithful governess, Fraulein Emma Lossow, came home from the wedding, they entered my room with tales of how my wife had been as charming even as the bride; how warm had been her welcome, how delightful her joy in the occasion.

[1] I have also added a few of her letters which have been treasured, and which illustrate her many-sided character.

I could understand it well. For by that singular association of ideas, which in this strange life of ours turns a smile so quickly into a tear, or wipes away the tear and brings the smile back again, I recalled another occasion at Rutland. When my wife's mother died at a ripe old age, we took the mortal body to her former home. Services were held in the church that was dear to her (and to me also, for there I was married), and all the old family friends came out to this home-coming. Many were there whom my wife had not seen since her girlhood. She moved among them like a queen, with a grace and charm and sweetness that were all her own, and to which no words of mine can do justice.

And now the time of her own departure was at hand, though we knew it not. But before I speak of this, let me recall my own illness. In December, 1901, my wife and I attended the Conference of the National Civil Service League at Boston. On my return I felt ill. My case soon developed into typhoid fever, and the doctor and the nurses took charge of me. When consciousness returned, and, indeed, it never quite left me, I became aware of a presence in the room that came and went, and yet was always there, and made even the tedious hours of convalescence sweet. She read to me St. John's Gospel and *In Memoriam*, and many another old favorite. But also she read me *Johnnie Courteau* and *Kim*, of both of which we became very fond. I can never forget the sweet cadence of

her voice in "Leetle Lac Grenier." This was dear to her also, because it and the life it described were dear to our naturalist and lover of nature—our son who had become a physician and gone to practice his laborious and self-denying profession in Buffalo.

On the morning of Saturday, January 18, 1902, my wife went out to choose a wedding-present for one of my college friends, who was justly dear to all the family—R. R. Bowker. She returned home pleased with her selection, and in very good spirits. She came into my room after lunch, and then lay down in an adjoining room which she had occupied during my illness. Both the nurse and I noticed that her slumber was sweet and tranquil. From that sleep her spirit passed away into that world whither so many she loved had gone before. There was no pain. I was with her from the first moment of the change. This comfort was vouchsafed me, and it was great.

On Tuesday, the 21st of January, the "deserted house," still beautiful, with her dainty cloak all covered with violets, was laid away at Greenwood, and there afterwards we placed this inscription:

LYDIA LORRAINE WHEELER.
August 11, 1840. November 22, 1866.
January 18, 1902.

Loving and beloved wife and mother.
Wise and faithful friend.
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

What seems to me especially remarkable in my wife's character is the union of qualities generally separated. She was keen to perceive the faults of others, yet tender and kindly in her judgment of them. She was equally keen to perceive her own. I would not make this memorial an indiscriminating eulogium. I would repeat what Rufus Choate said of Webster: "Do you ask me if he had faults? I answer he was a man." Her faults were *les défauts de ses qualités*—the faults incident to a delicately organized, high strung, sensitive nature. But she did not humor them—she was conscious of them, she laughed at them, she struggled against them, and made these struggles stepping-stones to higher things. The very quickness of her perception made her sympathy warm and her counsel wise. She was high-spirited and yet modest; courageous and yet distrustful of herself. Grace and charm of manner blended with good sense and sound judgment. Idealism was united with self-restraint and sober statement. When she corrected a fault she left behind a desire to do better.

One friend spoke to me of "her sweet graciousness, and a certain rare power of drawing out the best of people." Another said, "She was so unspeakably good to me through days of darkness and almost despair." Again another, "It was part of the greatness of her power, the spontaneous expression of it. She was the most suggestive person I ever knew." As James Rus-

sell Lowell said of another noble woman: "In such natures the imagination seems to spire up like a Gothic cathedral, over a prodigiously solid crypt of common-sense, so that its lightness stands secure on the consciousness of an immovable basis, and is logically knit up with it."

The kinswoman who knew her best said of her, "She was a sincere and loyal Christian—absolutely truthful." Her love of God and of man were both strong and steadfast, but without the least pretense. Shams were odious to her. She often said less than she felt, lest she should seem to say more.

She had the absolute devotion to duty of her New England ancestors; but she loved and appreciated the beauty and the joy of this life as if she had been a child of the Renaissance.

Finally, she united to a discriminating conservatism an aspiring, progressive spirit. Whenever she was dissatisfied with herself or her condition, she did not give way to vain repinings, but with brave heart strove for something better. Her longings and aspirations reached after nothing less than perfection, and she gradually drew towards that goal as years went by. And so she is to us a constant inspiration.

PAPERS READ
BEFORE THE
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON
CLUB

CHEAP CULTURE

JANUARY 7, 1891

MY title is not an attractive one. Besides being quite vague, it has in it a note of criticism which enlists prejudice rather than sympathy. "True," says the listener, "true in our wonderful age, all roads are open to every one. Wealth, education, and culture may be the possession of everybody." It is this very universality of which we are proud. Straight used to be the gates and narrow the ways that led to Heaven's choicest gifts, and few there were who found them. But now short and easy cuts have been made everywhere, and height after height may be scaled without great outlay of time or of toil. Certainly this is true of wealth; perhaps it is of education. It is ours to consider whether it be true of culture, and this we shall do: first, by defining what we mean by culture; and, secondly, by considering whether the cheap and easy roads by which we are all trying to arrive at this goodly estate may not be roads leading up to pasteboard houses rather than the fair and goodly mansions that our souls would fain dwell in.

And let us well understand that by culture we do not mean facts stored up in the memory from dictionary or encyclopædia or text-book, be they few or many. We do not mean knowing the names and dates of all our Popes or our Kings of England, or all the rules of our Latin or Greek grammar with their notes or sections, or playing a few or a great many tunes on the piano, or painting a few pictures or a great many china plates.

I once heard one lady ask another if she could tell her of a good text-book of mythology in which her daughter might study the subject. "No," was the answer, "I have never heard of a good text-book of mythology. True there are classical dictionaries; but if I felt that mythology was necessary to my daughter's education, I would have her read Homer and Hesiod and other classics, and thus have her gain a real knowledge of the subject and not a mere sham one."

No, culture means first digging up and softening and enriching the soil, and then putting into it seeds which may grow up into rich flowers and fruit. And human culture is that training of all the inborn powers which shall cause them to attain their very highest development. Moral traits are essential to it. Simplicity first of all and honesty. A mind at leisure from itself like the child's, and then a constant association with the loftiest ideals that the world affords. It is being, not seeming or possessing, and nothing that is done with intent to imitate or deceive,

nothing that is learned for display, or to complete one's education or to appear "well informed," or that one may be able to talk what one knows—none of the so-called accomplishments learned for decoration have anything to do with it; or they bear the same relation to it that those little gardens which we sometimes see children making by sticking the rootless stems of gay flowers down into the sand do, to the real fruit and flower-bearing garden. We smile and pass by these pathetic little shams and the flowers wither, and to-morrow the children may make another garden, and many a succeeding day they may do this, but never a to-morrow will come when these little flowers will take root, and the children may spend all their days in fruitless toil and never know the joy that comes from seeing things grow. And so the joy of culture lies not merely in the possession of learning, but in the wonderful consciousness of the power of growth and development. To find after years of training that your eye has learned to discern beauties in art and nature that it used to be blind to; that your ear detects harmonies where of old it heard only dull sounds; that words that once were meaningless are now fraught with wonderful meaning to your soul; that your judgment, once slow and uncertain, now quickly discerns between good and evil, between the false and the true,—this is what culture does for us. This is the joy it gives us, and there is none other like it.

And it is not true, as is sometimes said, that fastidiousness, with the miseries that it entails, comes with this development; that the sense quick to discern beauty becomes equally quick to discern ugliness, and therefore one loses as much as one gains in delight.

No; for in the first place there is pure and true pleasure in the very exercise of the power of discernment, and then, the deeper and the farther that we see into the secrets of art and of nature the more of harmony and beauty do we find. "Grace at the heart of all Grace." The discords of the universe lie very near its surface. I remember once hearing a pupil say to her drawing master, "I shall not come to the studio this week, the model is so uninteresting." "Uninteresting!" was the reply; "have you studied the muscles about her neck? I have never seen them so beautiful in any one. In fact," added this wise teacher, "in fact, there is no such thing as an uninteresting model. And the more you become a true artist, the more of wonderful and individual beauty you will find in every model."

Nor again does this culture, as it is often claimed, diminish our enthusiasm or our general benevolence and interest in the world around us. And this point is so well established in Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* that I will simply refer any who are in doubt to that, adding, however, a few words recorded of the great disciple of culture, Pericles, to give the strength of illustration to Arnold's argument.

"The feature which distinguished his mind," says the historian, "was an unwearying desire for culture. But Pericles learned, not for the sake of learning only. He had no intention like Anaxagoras of forgetting the world and mankind in the midst of his studies. He always kept the commonwealth in view; and in public acts he sought the reconciliation of the opposing forces with which he had become acquainted. For as he felt himself elevated and fortified by means of the culture acquired by him, so he recognized in it a power which ought to be employed for the good of the State. Ever a philosopher, he remained a statesman, and the whole ambition of his fiery character was directed towards ruling his fellow-citizens, and guiding the State by the resources of the mental superiority offered by Philosophy."

If we have dwelt a long time upon our definition, it is because we have wanted not only to define, but also to show how desirable true culture is,—that it is the real joy of living and of doing good, nay, perhaps the very end for which we were created. Certainly, if this be true, if there are any short and easy roads tending thereto, it will be a blessed thing if we have found them—only let us be sure that they are true roads.

That we may know them the better, let us consider the old method—proved a true one by its results and tried in the old times, before the world was in its present breathless hurry, when life was simpler than now and men did not strive after so much, and yet when they had attained

the very highest culture in the development of their inborn powers. Speaking of this, the Periclean Age of Greece, Curtius says:

"The ancient usages had continued to be observed, according to which it was not intended that the young should collect a multiplicity of knowledge by study, but that their inborn powers should be aroused and exercised; that from early morning they should accustom themselves to exert body and soul for worthy purposes according to a regular discipline. Grammar, music, and gymnastics exhausted the circle of teaching; the first two of the departments being closely connected with one another. For when the boy had learned to read and to write, he read the poets, he learned to declaim them, and with their words he appropriated to himself the wealth of the subject-matter. Reason and feeling, taste and judgment, were developed by his habituating himself more and more to the views of the poets of high universal reputation. The declamation of poems led to the accompaniment on stringed instruments and to an accurate acquaintance with the different rhythms. The power of the musical art proved its elevating and refining influence on the mind of the young without the intentional character of moral instruction disclosing itself to them. Though this mental culture was but plain and simple, yet it took hold of the entire man, and this all the more deeply and energetically inasmuch as the youthful mind was not distracted by a multiplicitous variety and could therefore give a proportionately closer devotion to the mental food and to the materials for culture offered to it, and thus the youth acquired a property in the whole spiritual inheritance of his nation.

"The principle lying at the root of all juvenile education was the attainment of a free and universal culture. None of the exercises in traditional use was designed as a preparation for particular operations and employments of civil life. Every new process in the art of poetry was at the same time a widening of popular culture, for the poets were the real teachers of the people, whose understanding they quickened, while they refined and deepened its moral consciousness."

So suggestive, so full of instruction in real culture is this chapter, that I wish I might go on and read the whole of it, and thus show what is cheap or poor or false, by the wholesome and salutary consideration of what is substantial and true.

But my title suggests other, perhaps less grateful, themes, and we must now consider some of our own methods by which we are training and cultivating not only our youth, but ourselves. Every one now is in an educational ferment. If knowledge does not run to and fro upon the earth, at least the desire for it, or for something that wears its guise, does. And not only have we schools, private and public, colleges and universities, and libraries and art schools, and museums and gymnasiums and conservatories; but we have all those facilities suggested by my title, which may be found legitimate or illegitimate according to the spirit which pervades them. There are Chautauqua schools and societies for home culture, there are the daily and weekly newspapers, literary clubs and lectures,

and translations and books about books, and essays and reviews and collections of poetry, and schools of philosophy and chromos and classes of "Portrait Painting Taught in Six Lessons," and books of directions "How to Judge a Picture." Vain would it be to try to enumerate all these easy ways by which we are trying, in conjunction with hosts of other aims and projects, to accomplish that which of old was thought to be the great work of one's whole life. Let us consider some of the most characteristic of these in detail.

One would think that there are very few people who would be led away by such arrogations as "Portrait Painting Taught in Six Lessons." And yet there are hundreds of classes of which this is only an exaggerated sample. Now to paint the human face and form is the height of the artist's ambition, and before he attempts it there must come years and years of study—in drawing from casts and from life, in anatomy and in chiaroscuro; long, long must his eye be trained in keenness and minuteness of vision, in delicate discrimination. Not only must he learn to paint, he must learn to see, and the reason why it is noble and right for him to spend perhaps his whole life in learning to paint a portrait is not because portrait painting is so wonderful and useful an art—though it is that also—but because the whole process is one of growth. He is developing his inborn powers; he is unlocking a whole world unseen by any but the

artist; that mighty world of eye and ear; both what he half perceives and half creates. And in his growing what lessons he has learned. Every day has shown him new secrets; every day the world has grown bigger and more beautiful to him. Repeated failures have taught him patience, and the ever-growing bigness of his aim has made him humble. He may never paint his portrait—his goal may ever flit before him unattainable; but no matter. His soul, his perceptions are ever growing larger and larger, and he has all time and forever before him, and every day he is reaping large reward.

And the student who has learned "Portrait Painting in Six Lessons"—what has he done? One shudders to think of any tangible results in canvas covered from such lessons. But six lessons in self-conceit and falsehood he has learned —six lessons in making believe. He sees no better than before. No inborn power has been aroused and quickened; he has gone six steps backward—out of the simplicity and humility of ignorance—six rootless stems he has planted in his garden, and unhappy one! he thinks them real flowers.

Should one never study art, then, unless one can give one's whole life to it? Certainly; take six lessons, or even one, in learning to draw; that is, in learning to see things as they really are, which is drawing and is most useful; for if you see things as they really are, you will see them in their relation to other things, know their propor-

tions and values; and this is in material things half the philosophy of life, and in spiritual matters, which it leads up to, it is the whole philosophy of life. But don't look for results in painted china or pictures. Far richer and gladder results than these poor monuments to self-complacency, and afterward to chagrin and mortification will be the enlarged capacity for enjoyment—the purer taste created—the keener discrimination—the riper judgment.

And if we may not learn art in six lessons, neither can we learn to judge art by directions given in a book—a few rules we may learn, a few technicalities of expression—high sounding words; and then joining the crowds that throng our picture galleries, we may rush around uttering shallow criticisms—both dishonest and cruel; in a few hasty words condemning works that have cost years of honest toil and which may have a meaning—whether well expressed or not—such as has not entered into one's conception at all; all that our foolish learning has done has been to destroy the wholesome, pleasant simplicity of our ignorance, so that we dare not say boldly and simply as the child does: I like, or I dislike this or that—though I don't know why. All this is very obvious and is easily condemned. It is cheap; but it is not culture.

How about our daily and weekly newspapers? It does not come within my province to discuss their merits or their usefulness. We speak only of the very best of them, and simply of them

in reference to the effect that they have upon culture.

It certainly does broaden one's mind to glance daily "from out our loophole of retreat," all over the world, and to see what it is about. There is a certain grandeur in sitting quietly in one's own nook, and taking a bird's-eye view of the whole universe every morning, before beginning one's own little round of work, and this is certainly a legitimate use of the daily journal. But it is quite another thing when we speak of those ponderous tomes, those encyclopædias—those condensed libraries represented by the better sort of our Sunday papers like the *Sunday Times*. That they contain a great deal of information cannot be denied; but it is all fragmentary, bits here and there from encyclopædias and opportune to nothing that we are especially interested in, and the constant changing of attention from subject to subject is a material waste of brain power that few can afford. The information gained may be retained a little while as something to be talked about, but it must melt away when next Sunday's issue comes with its new stores. It is casting all sorts of seeds miscellaneously into unprepared ground, and even if some take root, they will soon be choked from their "multiplicitous variety."

And so of all books about books, and lectures and essays and reviews of poets and poetry — pleasant and delightful as they may be for passing the time, but still filling up the time with the

"Good which is the enemy of the Better." Would n't it be better for instance to spend an hour every day for a week in reading Wordsworth, than to hear seven lectures about him. In the one case we might catch something of the poet's own "sweet and lofty calm," which the lecturer cannot give us unless he be another Wordsworth. It does not make us grow to know about the poets, but if we know them, we may appropriate some of the wealth of their own material. And if we go to the fountain-head, we shall drink sweet waters which have quite another flavor when brought to us in earthen vessels.

And so also of selections of poetry—valuable and labor saving and legitimate if one cannot make his own selections. Of course every one must be grateful for such mines of wealth, such infinite riches in a little room, as Palgrave gives us, for instance. Still they are cheap and easy roads to a knowledge of the poets, and can never give one half the inspiration that one finds in turning over page after page of the same author till one is fairly saturated with his spirit and catches perhaps a little of his own inspiration. The same may be said of translations. Heaven forbid that no one should read Homer but the Greek scholar, and still we must not forget that the translation is not Homer in all "the majesty of his own rolling music." It is some one else's guess at Homer. When one realizes how hard it is to express one's own thought, espe-

cially if it be at all subtle or vague, in one's own vernacular, one can readily see that it would be almost impossible to pass in the same thought through the medium of another mind into another language. A better scholar than we might make a better translation, but we may feel the thought that we cannot put in words. We may catch the wild spirit that refuses to wear the harness.

The same things that we have said about newspapers may be said of all serials and magazine reading. I know that they are the glory and the possession of our age; but none the less I deem them the good that is the enemy of the better, and if we swallow them all, we can have stomach for no other food.

If all this reading might pass for table talk, mere amusement for our tired and our leisure moments, then it might be merely restful and harmless, though it should not take the place of conversation, which has a human interest and is therefore better. But taking, as it necessarily must from its multiplicitous variety, the place of serious, consecutive study in which all our faculties are critically alert, in which we are developing the inborn power of thought, it certainly is simply an imitation of culture. It is a cheap and pleasant amusement—or else, for the more ambitious, a cheap and easy road to that "general information" which it is not an exaggeration to say is utterly inconsistent with real culture. It is pretty, gay flowers, which, alas, have no root,

amusing though they may be to the passerby, and a taste for it leaves no room for a taste for high and lofty study. To this phase of thought it would be well to bring Epicurus' noble maxim that "Abstinence from low pleasure is the only means of meriting or of obtaining the higher."

Clubs or societies like our own are perhaps of the same nature as these, and are open to the same objections, but still preferable because they have, or aim to have, conversation, or the interchange of thought—discussion, if we choose to call it by so ambitious a name. The paper read may have little intrinsic value. For unless the writer is a specialist, and has spent years in studying her subject, what she has to say can be of little moment to those who have the same facilities for thought and study as herself. But the thought that may be aroused, the interest that may be quickened, and the sympathy that may be made to flow quick and warm between the members by the discussion, may be worth a great deal; and if all do their duty, and come not to listen passively, but to judge, to criticise, to compare ideas, to contribute the thought that has perhaps been just aroused, and which, quickened by contact with other thought, may grow into something strong before our very eyes; why, then, — who knows? — we may be learning to think and to reason, and greater than this can no man do. The great difficulty will always be to keep the discussion on a high level and relevant, and to this end one oft-reiterated

motto should be, "My love, let us have no meandering."

We come now—passing over many divisions for want of time—we come to a consideration of a mammoth road which is supposed to lead to culture, namely, the Chautauqua School. There are several kindred societies, much simpler and more attractive than this, like the "Society for Home Culture," which has its headquarters at Cambridge and works quietly, bringing light to many who, without it, would be without a guide in their wandering. But we choose the Chautauqua School because it is so gigantic, and because, by its very exaggeration, it shows so well the defects of its qualities. It was founded in about 1874. It began in a Methodist Camp Meeting, whose especial aim, in the words of Mr. Vincent, from whose book I have all my information, was the "Enlarged Recognition of the Word," that is, the Bible. If this expression sounds a little patronizing, we are sure it was not intended to be so. It proved a popular move, and soon the leaders were forced to throw down sectarian boundaries, still, however, keeping to the religious study of the Word. Later it was decided that secular knowledge would facilitate the understanding of the Bible, and with this understanding it was admitted, and so gradually was unfolded that immense scheme that now, like some modern Briareus, reaches out hundreds of arms, embracing hundreds of thousands of people in every continent and almost

every isle beneath the sun. It has twenty-two different phases or circles for the various needs of its immense constituency, such as the Assembly, Normal Union, Teachers' Retreat, the College of Liberal Arts, the Society of Fine Arts, various Reading Circles, Schools of Theology, Musical Classes, newspapers, etc. All these report to the main office, Beside these there are twenty-nine kindred schools, which take Chautauqua for their guide and pattern. Time fails me to tell all that this movement promises and undertakes. Its claims are colossal. If any one wishes for any attainment, mental, moral, spiritual, or artistic, let him pay his fee and join a corresponding circle, and, presto! he has it. Would he speak the modern languages?—let him join the "Chautauqua School of Languages," and though he may not know a word of either French or German, in six weeks he will be able to conduct a conversation on ordinary topics in either language with facility, and corresponding advantages are claimed for Latin and Greek. Does he wish the benefits of foreign travel without spending money or time? —let him join "the Teachers' Retreat," and, in Mr. Vincent's own words, among many other advantages, "he may pack the delights and profits of one hundred and fifty days' travel into ten. In one hour he may have storms and icebergs, moonlight on the placid waters and sailors' songs, the sports of voyagers, the approach to the foreign shore." Each year a new journey is

taken, and three of four or perhaps half a dozen of these fifteen-day voyages will exhaust the known universe. Perhaps the best comment on these voyages, wherein there is not one real thought or experience, is the suggestion, which comes to us by force of contrast, of Alphonse Karr's *Voyage autour de mon Jardin*, wherein a poor man, but a philosopher, who cannot travel like his rich neighbor, sets out, by way of consolation, to make a tour around his own garden, and he finds therein such a world of wonder and marvels that he fills his whole delightful book with their history.

But to resume Chautauqua. Undoubtedly it does some good work. It could hardly fail to fly a little, flapping its big wings so wildly and continuously, and it is claimed that its circles have given to many people glimpses of something better than this dull round of life affords. Pity it is—sad pity—that it should not be glimpses into the pure light of culture instead of all this shining claptrap. Pity that instead of this slippery hold of ten thousand things, these hungry souls should not be given firm grasp of some one thing, say their own doorsteps or their own gardens, wherein may be found wonders of geology or of botany, so that their "dull round" would soon be found too big and too interesting for their too short lives.

"The Kingdom of God cometh not with outward show," says the Book which Chautauqua makes its *raison d'être*. Chautauqua's processes

may be some of them good and helpful, but its spirit is not that of culture.

In short, there is one touchstone which may be applied to all the roads which are supposed to lead to culture, and to all other methods by which we are striving and grasping to attain to that which does n't come by striving or grasping at all. Tennyson gives it to us:

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and heart according well,
> May make one music as before.

The mind and heart of the child are perfectly in tune. His very ignorance is lovely, because it is in harmony with the sweet morning twilight of his soul, and is what makes him to look up reverently and lovingly and with faith to those who are around him and above him; and the poet tells us that this sweet childlike harmony need never be disturbed,—the mind and heart may always grow together,—and it is only when they are growing together, and the harmony of our whole being is preserved, that we are on the road of true culture. And all that knowledge that puffeth up and makes discords in the soul —that consists of information gathered up without assimilation, and is not the growth of all our being, harmoniously together—is false. If, then, we would attain true culture, let us give up our feverish greed for collecting mere facts, which, like our other possessions, will be of

little use to us as we move on from sphere to sphere. Let us, though it may be with great self-denial, give up the useless efforts to make glittering gazettes and encyclopædias of what were meant to be our reasoning, our thinking, our growing, our childlike minds. Let us compass sea and land and give all time to make our own some one truth of nature or of art, sure that in so doing we shall in our developed powers have grown into the possession of many other truths. And if the way seems long, and growth seems slow, let us remember with Browning's grand old Grammarian, that we can afford to "leave Time for dogs and apes: man has forever."

THE WORLD'S HIGHWAYS

DECEMBER 13, 1893

"Men run to and fro, and knowledge is increased."

MAN is certainly a migratory animal. His tendencies thereto are not more discernible in his anatomy than in his nature, his soul of vast desires—always craving something new—something ampler and better, which, perchance, may satisfy his restless hunger. He is not only the animal who laughs,—who prophesies,—the tool-using, the umbrella-using animal; he is also the animal who has ennui and who travels, who conquers difficulties to get to the world's end, and for whom the infinite space that lies around him is not too large a field for his capacities. Was it, perhaps, made infinite lest sometime he should sit down with no more worlds to conquer, and so sink into the apathetic content which would give the lie to his God-given distinction?

Ulysses, the crafty, the guileful, the silver-tongued, is not the hero of our imagination; but we love him when, in his superb old age, he

summons once more to him his mariners to go forth and seek another world, unmindful whether the gulf shall wash them down or they shall

> Touch the Happy Isles,
> And see that great Achilles whom we knew.

What wonder if, with thoughts within us that can wander through eternity, we all have impulses that send us forth at times under the boundless heavens and the free sky to seek new worlds!

It is in this view that our subject to-day is fraught with interest. The world's highways are really the means that man has created in order that he may embody one of his noblest distinctions. In their creation he has developed indomitable will, energy, strength, and skill, and by means of them he has brought the resources of all the world to his command, and has grown big and cultured and sympathetic. Heaven bless them and speed them till they compass sea and land, and no pent up Utica contracts the soul of any man!

But all the same we may be thankful that the earth was not made with its highways all marked out upon it, and glad that while limbs were given us as hints of what we can do, wings were not also furnished, so that we might go whithersoever we would without trouble. Desirable as the consummation may be toward which we are pressing, the past would lose half its romance had not its heroes lived in the simplicity

engendered by loneliness and isolation, and their souls found the true development in stormy adventures by sea and by land. The lurid fires through which Siegfried sought his Brunhilda are but types of the glorious pathways which heroes have always had to make, before they could reach the haven where they would be.

In the absence of historic record, we may believe that in the beginning, as soon as men were scattered over the world at all, they felt within them the same instincts which move them now to push onward; and all through the Hebrew Scriptures we find lovely suggestions from which the imagination easily makes sweet stories of the simple journeyings of those early people. They walked along over unmade ways and at eventide they met their loves as Isaac met Rebekah, and then they dug their wells and built their altars, and under the starlit heavens they said their prayers and slept until the morrow. Or, like Abraham, they sat in their tents at close of day and called in travellers going by, for rest and food. What marvel if, in those simple days, when inns were homes, they sometimes entertained angels unawares.

Of a real journey for a definite end I know of nothing earlier than the story of the caravan that came down from Gilead, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh to exchange for corn in Egypt, and, stopping at "Dothan by the way," bought the beautiful boy whom his father loved above his brethren, and carried him down with

them to sell into slavery. This earliest of highways was often trodden afterward by those very brethren when, in their extremity, they sought corn in Egypt, and still later it became a hallowed way when trodden by the feet of the old patriarch as he hurried down to see his beloved son before the days of the years of his pilgrimage should be accomplished. So we see that when men first began to travel, it was in caravans,—on the edges of the desert,—with camels to carry their burdens; and some of these routes remain to this day and are used now, like highways leading from the Past to the Present. Sometimes we could almost wish that newer ways with their greater conveniences and greater destructiveness had not come to supersede those safe old desert ways.

After these come stories of early mariners, chiefly Phœnicians, who seem to have been the common carriers of those days, with a mission to extend everywhere the culture and wealth of Greece and Egypt. They had queer old vessels with banks and banks of oars. Some writers mention even forty, but we find such a number incredible. But they were awkward and heavy; the caravels of Columbus look like water-sylphs compared to them, and at first they only ventured timidly along the Syrian shore. They were manned by bold and enterprising souls,—who soon began to be merchants themselves as well as carriers, and, extending farther and farther out into the water, they found their way

through the Mediterranean and the Straits, and even went up the Atlantic coast, some say as far as Cornwall. They made a water passage, too, between Syria and Egypt, and found their way into the Red Sea, bringing back with them great wealth—we know not whence—this "gold of Ophir" of which we read so much. Who can tell what bold spirits possessed these brave men

> To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
> Of all the western stars until they died?

Life was only counted by adventure for them, and when they sailed and what they found we can only conjecture, for the highways of the sea are trackless and tell no tales, and they left no record behind them.

But by their results we can know something about them, for already a mighty influence began to be felt from all this going and coming to and fro; and from these highways and this intercommunication, relations were being established between nations, and commerce sprang up and the arts and sciences received an impetus and the amenities of life were carried everywhere, dignifying and ennobling mankind wherever they went. Great empires and cities, too, were founded—Tyre and Sidon and Carthage and Tadmor, the rose of the desert, enriched by every caravan that passed through it, till it bloomed and faded in its splendid Zenobia flower.

Some routes we know they had not found, for

if Alexander watering his steeds in the Indus and weeping for more worlds to conquer had known of the great empires on the vast plains of India and China, he would certainly have pushed his conquering phalanxes thitherward. Strange it seems that at this very time these great isolated empires did exist, with their own history of internal wars and revolutions and dynasties rising and falling, and of flourishing arts and sciences and religions and philosophies, some of which have come down to us in faint echoes from the chambers of the past, but much of which is lost to us forever.

Thank Heaven there are no such distant corners of the earth now, and we can no longer sustain such losses. A most interesting field of speculation might be opened here, however, about the growth of these great civilizations in their isolation. How did they in those early days in their utter loneliness attain to such heights in arts and morals as often leave us with all our advantages much to blush for? The only answer at all consistent with our theory is, that the empires themselves were stupendous, and their intercommunications, if we may judge from what remains, were of the very best. Professor Pumpelly tells us of a superb Chinese road going from Pekin to the principal gate of the great wall, built more than two thousand years ago, which would be used now were it not for ruts caused by some defect in fitting the stones together. This great road was eighteen

feet wide, and was built up from five to six feet above the ground on granite stones laid on beds of concrete and cement, and its structure is still perfect. The same authority tells us of two great caravan routes which two thousand years ago, under the brilliant Han dynasty, connected China with all the countries of Central and Western Asia, and over these he claims that travel was safer then than now, and that these roads were thronged with caravans and armies and studded with relay houses for postal couriers. We know, too, that the water communication throughout the empire has always been extensive, beginning with the imperial canal, which alone makes navigation possible for over six hundred miles; and so we may conclude that, though isolated from other nations, within its own vast borders communication was always greater than in the western worlds, which, however, had more communication with each other.

It would seem as though rivers were the natural suggestion for highways in our planet, and so we find that civilization has always followed their courses, and commercial prosperity with its great cities has always been found upon their banks, as witness the Euphrates, the Nile, the Ganges, the Thames, and the Mississippi. But great rivers proved inadequate even though supplemented by navigation along the coasts, when it became a question of commerce; and soon a need began to be felt which drove men to the ocean and to do business upon the great waters,

and the time began to draw near when this great highway of the world should no longer be a barrier between nations, but an element which, in years to come, was to draw them together. I need not here tell the story of how Columbus, seeking a pathway to the land of old civilization and fabulous riches and splendor, came quite unexpectedly upon the gem of the sea and found a new world in looking for an old one; or of how, following in his wake or moved by the spirit of the times, countless other brave souls came after him, till all Europe seemed bound westward; and then came Vasco da Gama and his followers, who, starting forth toward the rising sun, pursued their way amid storm and tempest with treacheries on ship and shore,— men's hearts failing them for fear of what should come,— till at last the wild Cape was doubled, and, amid smoother waters, the dauntless leader still kept on till finally the longed for land was found, and was opened to Europe with all its wealth and its old civilization.

A great many unexpected results followed the opening of these new routes, and it is interesting, though melancholy, to notice how, as they were found so much shorter and better than the old ways, these fell into disuse, and all along them towns and cities lost their proud pre-eminence, and, fed no longer by travel and commerce, fell to ruin and decay. The quaint old town of Wisby, capital of the Island of Gothland, is one of these. In the thirteenth century this

rich and busy city was in the full zenith of its splendor. Situated on the island in the Baltic just midway between Sweden and Russia, before the routes by Genoa and Venice and around the Cape were discovered most of the commerce passing through Russia stopped at Wisby, and it became so important a station that it was called "the eye of the Baltic." It grew so rich that old chroniclers assert that even Solomon in all his glory was poorer in gold and silver and precious stones than this little city. Its housewives, tradition tells us, used golden spindles and its hogs were fed from silver troughs. Its old gray walls, surrounding the city from sea to sea, and standing still with their thirty-six great square towers and massive gateways, were built as long ago as 1288. Within these walls, now so deserted, were gathered then a strange medley of people from all over the world—Russians, Germans, Dutch, and English, men from the Far East, monks, friars, and pilgrims from distant Palestine. And the beauty of its quaint old gabled houses, with their rich stained-glass windows, its eighteen old churches dating back to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, each rich with legend and story, all tell of the fulness of life and of art and culture once found there, but now passed away forever. And its history is the history of many towns, whose glories and whose life went out when the ocean became the highway for the commerce of the world.

It was a wonderful step forward, however,

this change on the face of the great deep, which, from being the *terra incognita* of the ancients, now became the most travelled highway, a road already builded, needing no repairs, extending everywhere and always inviting new ventures.

The old roadways over the land, which had often been brought to great perfection, had been built chiefly for military purposes, and were of little service for commerce owing to the utter inadequacy of any means of transport. Still they were wonderful structures, some of them, and their condition has always been a fair criterion of a nation's progress in civilization.

"And there were no highways in Israel in those days."

So dramatically does the sacred historian tell the story of Israel's downfall and desolation.

In no way is the glory and strength of the Roman Empire better shown than in the history of its superb roadways. These reached out like great arteries from their proud centre, carrying to all its outlying provinces the wealth and learning and luxury of the world's mistress. But they were built for armies and not for merchandise, for it concerned imperial Rome but little that her provinces should be connected by commercial interests. What she did care for was that her armies should be conveyed with quickness and safety from one end to another of her great dominions, and so she built great military roads everywhere—so many that Bergier, in his *Histoire des grands chemins de l'Empire*,

takes eight hundred folio pages to describe them. Thirty-seven led out from Rome into Italy alone, and are well known to us all as the great Appian Way,—the Queen of Roads,—the Via Latina, the Via Flaminia, etc.

And these were only the beginning of the great network which stretched out into Greece and Asia and Africa, and over all the islands—Sicily, Sardinia, and England. And these roads were not rude paths just made passable for horses and chariot wheels, but were constructed on the most scientific principles, trenched and laid on solid stone, and built up three or four feet with stones rammed together, so that not a crevice remained. They went straight to their destination too, as the Romans themselves did; and when it was necessary mountains were excavated and forests felled and marshes drained and chasms and rivers spanned by bridges in a manner that does not suffer by any comparison with later methods. It was a magnificent system, but it was for war and not for peace or the arts of peace; and when Rome fell her roads went with her glory. The hostile states into which she was divided needed fortifications against their enemies, not easy communications with them. The history of roads is not the history of wars, but of commerce. We see the same story in England. The names of her old Roman roads, as old Watling Street, are all that remain save a few ruins of those superb structures which crossed the island from north to south

and from east to west and branched out in all directions. For when the Roman armies left there forever, then there was no use for them, or they so far exceeded the wants of the people that they soon fell into neglect and disrepair. During succeeding ages the little intercourse that was maintained between the parts of Great Britain was effected by rude pathways, traversed by pedestrians or at best by horses.

The state of things that this finally led to is the staple for Macaulay's eloquent chapter on the seventeenth century in England. A strange anomaly the country presented then. An almost incredible contrast existed between the great cities, which were rich and populous, and the country, which was wild and unreclaimed, —covered with moor and fen, where wild game abounded and cottages were few and poor; and the contrast between the country gentleman and the citizen was equally great. Living always on his estates, with scanty communication with the capital and knowing nothing of the great world, his manners and habits were those of his grooms and his game-keepers who formed his court. If, by strange fortune, he sometimes found his way to the capital, he was like a bull in a china shop —a prey to sharpers and a butt to the polished gentlemen of the Court; buffeted and baffled on every side and glad to get home to his own rude kingdom.

This state of things was caused, says Macaulay, by the extreme difficulty, almost impossi-

bility, of getting from place to place. To realize the condition of the roads, we need only to read the incredible funny stories that Pepys gives us in his *Diary;* how often he loses his way in going over the most travelled roads or suffers agonies of fear lest he should be drowned on the King's Highway; or, better still, refer to Arthur Young's expressive letters of terror and dismay: "I know not," he says, "in the whole range of language" (and if he did n't, we may be sure that no one else did)—"I know not terms sufficiently expressive to describe this infernal road. Let me seriously caution all travellers who may propose to travel this terrible country to avoid it as they would the devil, for a thousand to one they break their necks or their limbs, by overthrows or breakings down. They will here meet with ruts which I actually measured four feet deep and floating with mud only from a wet summer. What then must it be in winter. This is not opinion, but fact," he adds, "for I actually passed three carts broken entirely down in these eighteen miles of execrable memory."

And yet Arthur Young lived in the days—the improved days—of turnpikes. These old seventeenth-century roads were kept in order, or in disorder, by means of a law which compelled the poor people living along and never travelling on them to work gratuitously upon them six days in every year; and yet they violently opposed, even to bloodshedding, the turnpike acts which imposed a small toll upon travellers for

the benefit of the roads. Charles II. established the first turnpike road, which intersected the counties of Hertford and Cambridge. But it long remained an isolated one, and it is only about a century ago that any really good system of roads was attempted throughout the country; and it is within our own century that Telford and Macadam first began to work on scientific principles—draining well before they built, so as to make sure of their foundations. Now, England is crossed by thousands of miles of superb turnpikes, and no one is far from the capital, and one may drive all over the little island, lovely in its fadeless green and gay with hedgerows and sweet garden flowers. In short, there is no better illustration than the England of the seventeenth century and that of to-day to show what facile communication within its own borders does for a nation, in bringing together its material resources, in carrying to its remotest corner the refinement and culture and morals of its great cities, and in throwing down everywhere the narrow walls of provincialism and of prejudice. If we needed another illustration, there is France—the France of the Revolution. Our same friend, Arthur Young, tells his best stories to show how difficult it was in those days to go from town to town even with his own horse and chaise, and to the ignorance springing from this scanty intercourse he attributes many of the evils which resulted in the Revolution.

Perhaps it is stretching the point a little to

count bridges among the world's highways, and yet they have been the essential feature of many a great road, and around them have clustered romance and story that have made them often remembered after the roads themselves were forgotten or disused.

The Rialto, perhaps, was not a thoroughfare. It only connected the two largest of the Venetian islands, Rialto with San Marco, and was not necessarily a part of any long journey, and yet when Venice was the Queen of Commerce it was upon this bridge and at San Giacomo that many mighty transactions took place which influenced the exchange of all the world. We are not thinking of Shylock's, though his was perhaps the most real, and will long outlive them all. And Shakespeare's little phrase, "Oft on the Rialto," shows how keen an observer our poet was, and how romance is often the truest history. But there are other bridges which are truly thoroughfares and come more fairly under our consideration. There is the old Pont d'Avignon, about which we recall the childish song:

Sur le Pont d'Avignon,
Sur le Pont d'Avignon,
C'est la qu'on danse,
C'est la qu'on danse en rond.

Every one coming from Italy or Marseilles to Paris or to Flanders had to cross this beautiful old bridge. And London Bridge, which a hun-

dred familiar songs celebrate, and which through all the ages before 1700, any one coming from France or Spain or from Sussex or Kent had to cross on his way north. And Stirling, famous old Stirling, whose name is rife with song and story:

Forth bridles the wild Highlanders.

And so the only convenient crossing for miles around for any one in Fife or Perthshire or anywhere in the east of Scotland who wished to go to London or to Edinburgh was this famous bridge, as poor Alan Breck and David Balfour, and many another hero of romance or of history, could have testified.

Then there are the two bridges across the Seine, and that beautiful one so dear to the heart of the Japs that they bring it into all their pictures along with their beloved mountains.

Shall we ever look with a similar love and reverence on our own Brooklyn Bridge?—perhaps the loveliest, certainly the most wonderful of them all, and already one of the world's great thoroughfares, though, perhaps, it was builded too late in the world's history to be gilded by the sun of romance.

A long step, this which we have taken from the Rialto to the Brooklyn Bridge; and, like Halleck, having come down to the days of fact, not fable, or of fact more wonderful than fable, we find it difficult to get back again. For it is

really in the present—the wonderful living present—that the great interest of our subject lies.

For many thousand years poor man had been toiling over hard ways, using his own feeble strength, backed by his indomitable will, to traverse this round world whose confines marked his home. But then there came a revolution and men found new laws to go by, and new forces to use—forces and powers that seem to have been kept in reserve for him until he should be sufficiently developed to dominate them. And now, no longer relying on his own strength, he finds that the energies of nature are his to command,—tireless, inexhaustible energies,—and with his own giant will as master, and with the giant steam for his servant, he has in the last one hundred years been going, going at an ever accelerating pace, till

Giddy rapture almost doubt he fly.

The story of the evolution of the locomotive was told most graphically in the Transportation Building at Chicago. In the Baltimore & Ohio exhibit there was a series of pictures over two hundred in number, beginning with a representation of the first attempt of man to get over the ground by something that was not an animal force. A funny little carriage on two wheels, made as light as an English carriage could be, is depicted as skimming over the ground, carrying one passenger and propelled by

a pretty little sail. The next picture shows two sails and two passengers, and so the series goes on for some time with various sails. Then, finally, a little open car is to be seen with a stove and a pipe that seems to come out of a man's hat, through which a little cloud of steam is issuing, and, *le voilà!* the steam-engine! There are, however, almost two hundred pictures before it reaches anything like a practical state, and even then it is far from being the steam-engine of our proud days. To exhibit these there is another series of engines themselves, beginning with the little " De Witt Clinton " and its successors, which answered to the following requirements: "the engine must at most not weigh when in operation more than 3 tons and must on a level road be capable of drawing day by day fifteen tons at a rate of fifteen miles an hour "; and ending with that magnificent and stupendous triumph, the famous "999" of the New York Central, a creature before which one is almost overwhelmed, until one realizes that this lusty young Titan is man's creature and submissive to his dominion. I cannot describe this great creation, still less take the measure of his strength. But he has carried his coaches at the rate of eighty-two miles an hour; he weighs 204,000 pounds. He has a heart of iron and sinews of steel, and when he has gone a thousand hours, or crossed a continent, he has no need to rest and wipe a weary brow or gather up new strength. He cares not how far he travels,

and he only stops when his master says the word, and never because he is weary.

This is only one way in which the story of transportation was told over and over again in this great building. Machinery, machinery everywhere, and steam and electricity doing in their thousand nerveless ways the work man has done so long and so wearily—while man directs and guides the whole. And with these inexhaustible forces and man's giant will, and with the great law of the conservation of energy which declares that in the world of force, as in that of matter, nothing is ever lost, what limit can we put to the possibilities of our achievements? And if we say that beyond "999" we can no farther go, it is because we are told that in this consummate creation this story of steam will end, because it must give way to the new story of electricity, which is just beginning.

With all these new methods of transportation, what a change has come over the world's highways both by sea and by land; not one road across a continent, but a hundred roads, all vying with each other in swiftness and comfort; not one waterway between the continents, but swift steamers hurrying to and fro in all directions, invested with every comfort and luxury that the heart of man can conceive, and speeding from port to port at the rate of five hundred miles a day.

To keep track now of these highways would

be impossible. Only a guide-book can give any adequate idea of them, or tell their story in the lightning-like manner that befits the subject.

And the work never seems to cease; new roads are building every day and new waterways are being opened. To-day a railway is in process of construction across the wild steppes of Siberia which will shorten by one half the journey from Shanghai to Western Europe. That is, when this is finished, you can go by steamer from Shanghai to Vladivostok, and thence directly across Siberia in from fifteen to twenty days instead of from forty to fifty as now. This will develop the agricultural and mineral resources of Western Siberia, and open new markets for Russian goods, and maybe the happy colonization of all that dreary country will follow in its wake. If so, the enormous sum of $300,000,000, which it is estimated the road will cost, will not be thrown away.

The waterways that are being opened, are taking a new and most fascinating form. Ship-canals also are making history every day, and our subject would be incomplete without reference to them. They are especially interesting because they seem to revert to nature's own scheme of using rivers for communication, and their picturesqueness constantly appeals to our imagination. Now, it is no matter where the bounds of the salt sea have been placed, for every little town may become a seaport as Manchester has done, and the mandate, "Thus far shalt thou

go, but no farther," holds good no longer, for we can bring the ocean where we like. There are delightful little short-cuts, too, from sea to sea, cutting off dangerous headlands; as the Baltic Canal which crosses Schleswig-Holstein from Kiel to the Elbe and connects the Baltic with the Atlantic. It was planned five centuries ago for ships, but now soon will be finished on a magnificent scale for steamers, and then all that stormy passage around Denmark, which wrecks annually about two hundred vessels, will be saved.

The Suez Canal carried in 1893 twenty times the tonnage that it carried the year after it was opened. Many of these canals were begun long ago as ordinary canals, then for long years they have been disused; but now, under the great impetus of our age, they are developing into great rivers, navigable for steamships. There is the "ditch," as the English called it, planned two hundred years ago by Colbert, now being made navigable for ships from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, "the canal of the two seas," which will save the whole distance around Spain and through the Straits. Even as I write, rejoicing shouts come to me over the triumphal completion of the Corinth Canal, a work whose history takes us as far back as the time of Nero, for he first conceived the idea and began the work on the very site where it is now completed in its nineteenth-century form. Nine years they have been at work on it now, although it is only

four miles long; but it has in some places the stupendous height of 265 feet (or, according to some, 290 feet). What other links are there which connect us so closely and so surely with the past as these great works, begun by the ancients and handed down to us to finish, after a fashion that would never have entered into their wildest dreams?

And if our progenitors, they who sailed in their rude barks along the Syrian shores or wandered with their camels over the star-lit Syrian deserts, could never have dreamed of the marvellous journeyings of our own age, what marvels may not lie before us and our children in the years that are to come? We are moving rapidly now, and changes are coming thick and fast upon us. One improvement chases another breathlessly off the stage. The camel, the mule, the horse, the sail gave way slowly to steam. But steam in its hundred years of dominion has made more changes than the thousands of years before it, and steam is losing its laurels before the rushing onset of electricity—that wonderful force which engineers say is enslaving the steam-engine before it does away with it forever,—a force which, according to the great Englishman, Joule, is like the nervous force of the animal, and is going to change the whole "soul" of work. Will this new force be satisfied with an empire over sea and land, or will she claim the boundless tracks of air for her dominion, and there, in some upper current,

where no adverse winds can stay her progress, in the utter tranquillity of the elements run her full course and be glorified, with full scope for all her powers? And what then? "Alas, we know not anything." Imagination can paint her pictures, but she cannot certify them, and so we turn away in wonder and weariness from the "Vision of the world and all the wonders that shall be." To what good is it all? Will life be any sweeter or longer or more wholesome when all these marvels are achieved, and when there are no longer any distances to lend enchantment to our view. Are our virtues greater, or our lives purer and kindlier than those of our forefathers; are we getting daily nearer to that all-encompassing love which alone, it is said, makes the world go merrily; and does not satiety come with possession and weariness dwell with all knowledge?

We have no answer to these questions, only one or two thoughts to which they give rise, which may perhaps bear upon them a little. Dryden, in the first days of the Royal Society,—when every department of science seemed to have received such a mighty impetus from the Baconian philosophy that men thought all knowledge was not only their province, but their subjected dominion,—Dryden, after singing the triumphs of the Golden Age, which he deemed just at hand, predicted that the Royal Society, having exhausted all terrestrial knowledge, would lead men on to wonders that lay beyond the earth:

Then we upon the globe's last verge shall go
And view the ocean leaning on the sky,
From thence our rolling neighbors we shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.

Now we smile at Dryden's anticipation and promise ourselves no such consummation in any near future. We have learned that there is no prospect of our achieving all knowledge—rather we have found that with every step forward in the processes of time, the great unknown is growing bigger and bigger, the circumference enlarging with the radius, so that we need not falter lest we exhaust our boundless kingdom, or dread that satiety lie in the "Path of Progress."

Let me quote from Vogüé, in his article on "Les Galleries des Machines," of the French Exposition of 1889. After depreciating passionately the spirit which would separate art from industry, or poetry and letters from the applied sciences, he goes on to show us the great underlying truths of which he was always conscious in this great gallery—truths which the imagination alone can see and the spirit of poetry alone adequately express,—and this is what he says:

"The other evening, before going to the Gallery of Machines, I reread *Prometheus Bound*, that sovereign drama into which Æschylus has drawn all the philosophy and all the sorrows of mankind. When I entered into the iron nave, flooded with light and all trembling with the

breath of mysterious power, it seemed to me that the book was open before me, or rather that the poem had become living. The actors were there upon the stage. Force, Power, and that eternal Prometheus in which the Greek tragedian has incarnated at once Science and Man. The divine force which riveted the 'indestructible brass' upon the Caucasian rack has changed his form. But we know him in his form of iron, and we find him still poetic. Prometheus has stolen the fire from heaven a second time, to restore it again to us,—more subtle, more inventive, more helpful. And now he will not be punished for his gift. Oh, I am mistaken. It is not *Prometheus Bound* which I see before me. It is that other drama, so long lost, but found now and produced upon this stage. It is *Prometheus Unbound.* The Titan has joined hands with Force and Strength. He suffers from them no more, he uses them as his servants. He has bound them in the frail network of these magnetic threads. And the Chorus which mourned the fate of the heroic criminal, for having loved mankind too much, will now hold another language before this Power which it no longer fears:

"'O Force, once my enemy and fatal,' it cries, 'be henceforth blessed and glorified! Thou art the spirit divined by the ancient poets since Æschylus, the spirit which Virgil felt acting through all the world and penetrating through every member thereof. Thou comest forth from the Primeval Power which is also Goodness and Wisdom. Thou seemest a reflection of its wisdom. Bring to us also one ray of its goodness. Thou canst not come from the Pure Source solely to put gold into a few hands. Be merciful to the little ones. Soften and sweeten their humble tasks. Become terrible if we need thine

aid to defend our soil, a thunderbolt dispensing Life and Death, thou who canst annihilate man. Or shining peacefully in the Lamp of his Labor irradiate this palace where he works, and where we worship thee, O Force!' "

SONNETS

(Read by Mrs. Bellamy before the Wednesday Afternoon Club, March 19, 1902)

I DON'T know whether the love of the sonnet form of poetry belongs to age or not, but I am sure that it is not a youthful taste. The truth is that the slow, sweet hours of youth have no need to abbreviate their pleasures. What is time to their wanton souls who have all time before them?—and so one great and unique charm of the sonnet does not appeal to them. But think what a precious thing is brevity to us who count and hoard our fleeting moments. To be able in these days when new literature accumulates and swarms around us like butterflies in June, to be able at once in fifteen or twenty minutes to decide whether the new is going to be of value, and if it is, to be able to make it our own, a possession of our memory, in as much more time—surely nothing could be more delightful or more valuable.

But yet I am not going to concede that the chief merit of the sonnet is that there is so little of it. On the contrary, it is that, being good in

itself, it is good to have it attainable. Its charms are many and various: the melody of its form and the exquisite complexity of its evolution, the marvellous manner in which its fourteen lines fall into place, not arbitrarily, but by heaven-ordained laws of melody and of verse. It is order and symmetry and song—poetry subordinated to music. And if this is not at once apparent to our English ear, it is because the sonnet properly belongs to the Italian tongue, where rhymes are plentiful, and verse and music are eternally married.

I am not going to give in this paper a treatise on the sonnet. You will notice that my title is "Sonnets" and not "The Sonnet"; and any one who cares for it will find in Theodore Watts' admirable article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the history of its growth and of its whys and wherefores,—why it should be fourteen lines, why decasyllabic lines, why the rhymes of the first eight lines or octave must be but two and arranged after the manner of the stanzas as in *In Memoriam*, and why the last six, or sestet, may have more rhymes arranged with more freedom. The reasons are all satisfactory enough when one has read them, and the results, which are what we are more immediately concerned with, are so lovely that we really care very little about their *raison d'être*. Of course, the sonnet must be homogeneous, for it is the expression sought for a single emotion or sentiment, requiring nothing so long as the ode

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itself, it is good to have it attainable. Its charms are many and various: the melody of its form and the exquisite complexity of its evolution, the marvellous manner in which its fourteen lines fall into place, not arbitrarily, but by heaven-ordained laws of melody and of verse. It is order and symmetry and song—poetry subordinated to music. And if this is not at once apparent to our English ear, it is because the sonnet properly belongs to the Italian tongue, where rhymes are plentiful, and verse and music are eternally married.

I am not going to give in this paper a treatise on the sonnet. You will notice that my title is "Sonnets" and not "The Sonnet"; and any one who cares for it will find in Theodore Watts' admirable article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the history of its growth and of its whys and wherefores,—why it should be fourteen lines, why decasyllabic lines, why the rhymes of the first eight lines or octave must be but two and arranged after the manner of the stanzas as in *In Memoriam*, and why the last six, or sestet, may have more rhymes arranged with more freedom. The reasons are all satisfactory enough when one has read them, and the results, which are what we are more immediately concerned with, are so lovely that we really care very little about their *raison d'être*. Of course, the sonnet must be homogeneous, for it is the expression sought for a single emotion or sentiment, requiring nothing so long as the ode

or epic, but too complex for the epigram or single stanza. Its formality forbids the abandonment of passion and compels self-restraint; and perhaps this is one reason why the poets have so often chosen it for the expression of their finest fancies, their intensest enthusiasms, their most intimate emotions, to unlock their very souls. Under its mask they have not been afraid to let loose their too fervid souls, and we have found behind its veil of self-restraint, instead of exaggeration, simplicity and dignity, the concentration and force compelled by its narrow limits and melodic form; for the sonnet, or little song, was always sung in its Italian cradle to the sound of the lute or mandolin; and even in our rougher tongue the varied vowel tones will often suggest to the delicate ear the timbre of guitar or lute. According to Mr. Watts, the beautiful separation into octave and sestet of the true sonnet form, is but another embodiment of the musical rhythm of the ocean wave with its ebb and flow. Mightily it rushes in in the great crescendo of the octave, then, pausing, breaks upon the beach and falls back in the diminuendo or flow of the more varying sestet. It is a charming theory, and I believe it is true of all the Petrarchan sonnets; but we miss it in Shakespeare's (who disclaimed all the economics of art), and often in Milton's and others, which we cannot find in our hearts to call imperfect.

Mr. Watts wrote a sonnet to embody his the-

ory, which I should like to give here, the more since, although perfect in form, it yet voices a lovely sentiment which we should hate to analyze. It is as follows:

Yon silvery billows breaking on the beach
Fall back in foam beneath the star-shine clear,
The while my rhymes are murmuring in your ear
A restless love like that the billows teach:
For on the sonnet waves my soul would reach
From its own depths and rest within you, dear,
As through the billowy voices yearning here
Great nature strives to find a human speech.

A sonnet is a wave of melody,
From heaving waters of the impassioned soul
A billow of tidal music one and whole,
Flows in the octave, then returning free
Its ebbing surges in the sestet roll
Back to the depths of Life's tumultuous sea.

Here we have the true form with all its requirements studiously regarded. We will just give the close of a little poem, which another wrote on this, to show how Shakespeare varied from the form. But not the less, our Shakespeare knew another way; by full discourse

To show his picture as it grew
Worked out in many sided force,
Then when the heart can wish no more
With a strong couplet bars the door.

And this is just what it seems to me our Shakespeare does. And, incomparable as are his sonnets and easily our favorites, still the last two

lines have always a little the force of a door shut suddenly in one's face; and often we wish they were not there to mar with their explosive energy the linked sweetness long drawn out of the other twelve lines. In fact, the true sonnet structure is so perfect, so delicate, so insinuating, that the soul once steeped in it finds nothing else so convincing.

For a few weeks this summer I confined my reading very much to sonnets, and I found that I was losing my taste for all other poetry. It seemed rugged and coarse as well as prolix, and needed weeding and harmonizing. It was as though I had been walking in a garden enclosed, —a garden within a garden,—where nothing grew but roses, and all the other gay flowers seemed gaudy and coarse. For, you know, no other flower bears comparison with the rose. It occurred to me then, that if we had an academy for our Immortals, and I were the king of it, I would admit no one therein until he had practised a little on sonnets as a discipline for his too versatile and facile pen. And I would establish a chair of sonnets in our universities; and our youth who wanted to train themselves for writers should be taught to take long poems and convert them into sonnets. Of course, the immediate result of all this work would be many bonfires. But the result which I should hope for would be the development of the sonnet characteristics in our literature. Think of a literature whose prevailing characteristics were

dignity, reticence, simplicity, and force or concentration.

I have spoken of the Italian origin of the sonnet. Its true parent was, I believe, Fra Guittone d'Arezzo, although the first single sonnet of which we have any knowledge was by Pier de le Vigne, Secretary to Frederick of Sicily. But all this you will find in the *Encyclopædia*, together with an account of the first appearance of this lovely exotic in England, where it bloomed with variations under the fostering care of Sir Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and notably of Spenser, Sir Walter Raleigh, and the rest.

But, setting aside all this history, I find outside the *Encyclopædia* the following fable, which, after all, contains more truth than the other, because it shows in its rather occult fashion the way in which the sonnet became just what it is. It runs as follows:

"Upon a day Apollo met the Muses and the Graces in sweet sport, mixed with earnest. Memory, the grave and noble mother of the Muses, was present likewise. Each of the fourteen spake a line of verse. Apollo began. Then each of the nine Muses sang her part. Then the three Graces warbled each in her turn, and finally a low, sweet strain from Memory made a harmonious close. This was the first sonnet, and, mindful of its origin, all true poets take care to make Apollo strike the key-note for them, when they compose one, and to let

Memory compress its pith and marrow into its last line."

You may take this for what it is worth,—believe it or not as you like; but to me it is a very satisfactory history of the sonnet, and quite sufficient for what I am afraid I must call my unfactful mind. And this is all the really useful information that I propose to give on my subject. And, as we would like to meet as many of these delightful strangers or friends as possible in our half-hour, we will spend no more time in introducing them or talking about them, but go forth to greet them with all the speed we may.

It is sad that we must leave out the whole world of Italian sonnets, and yet it is obviously wise to do so; for the lovely Italian tongue loses its music and sweetness in translation, and with translations alone we should have to do. All the same, however, there are one or two of Dante's sonnets which are so beautiful, even in translation, that they have always ranked among my favorites, and I have only hesitated which of them to choose to class with one of Shakespeare's as the two most exquisite in the world. It would be delightful to read them all, and decide on their merits; but as time does not allow that, we will quote the one which, perhaps, at first reading seems to be the loveliest. It is, of course, addressed to his most gentle lady, of whom he says, in introducing her, that where she passed along many said, "This is not a woman, but rather

one of the most beautiful angels of heaven"; nor can we wonder that they felt so when we read the thoughts with which she inspired her worshipper:

All welfare hath he perfectly beheld
Who among ladies doth my lady see,
And whoso goeth with her is compelled
Grateful to God for this fair grace to be.
Her beauty of such virtue is indeed
That ne'er in others doth it envy move;
Rather she makes them like her to proceed
Clothed on with gentleness and faith and love.
Her sight creates in all humility
And maketh not herself to please alone
But each gains honor who to her is nigh.
So gentle in her every act is she,
That she can be recalled to mind by none
Who does not, in love's very sweetness, sigh.

Here we may, I think, say that we have absolute perfection. The form is so perfect that we are altogether unconscious of its influence; and the thought is so delicately, exquisitely spiritual that it is almost supernatural. It is like the air of Paradise, and suggests Fra Angelica's ravishing angels, though even they seem earthly compared to a creature "whose sight creates in all humility," and whose beauty "of such virtue is indeed," that it creates no envy, but rather makes all who see it "to proceed, clothed on with gentleness and faith and love." The last line is said to be truly untranslatable, and if so, it should certainly make the Italian tongue

immortal; that such a monument to heavenly beauty and tenderness might be imperishable.

I fear that I have not been very wise in introducing this incomparable sonnet at my very beginning. I have certainly nothing else that will compare with its ravishing sweetness. Indeed, I doubt whether anything so beautiful ever was said of woman, and I wonder if this could have found expression in any form but that of the sonnet. But what a sense of inexhaustible wealth it gives, that such infinite riches could be crowded into such little room, and so very easily made one's own possession. The sonnet needs no further justification, and to him who says, "Learn it not," we should say, rather, "Draw near to it with loving gratitude and reverence."

It is curious and interesting to notice with how many infelicities the first English sonneteers had to struggle. It seemed as though this beautiful flower could not be made to bloom on our soil; the rhymes would not come and arrange themselves aright; the vowels lost their sonorousness, and the music showed a tendency to become a jingle. If we finally triumphed over the difficulties, it is because sweet melodies and carefully balanced expressions are not everything in any poetry. And in the splendidly glowing thought; in the masterful idea which was in sympathy with nothing less than the universe,—in that fundamental brain work which, as Rossetti says, is at the foundation of

all art work, we were not wanting. Still, there was a long time when sonnets were a sickly lot; given up to amatory expressions of a very sugary sweetness, as though they were n't good or strong enough for anything else. But there were lovely exceptions, and, curiously enough, the one that occurs to us is that one of Spenser's on *Easter Day*, which we may well call a collect in verse, as Macaulay called some of Milton's long afterward. You will notice in this how we lose both dignity and simplicity in alternating the rhymes, and how we miss the tidal ebb and flow, with the pause and change of movement, which should come between the octave and the sestet, and which are not at all noticeable in this quiet growth of thought:

Most glorious Lord of life that on this day
Didst make Thy triumph over Death and Sin,
And having harrowed hell didst bring away
Captivity thence Captive, us to win.
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
And grant that we for whom Thou didest die,
Being with Thy dear blood clene washed from sin,
May live forever in felicity.
And that Thy love, we weighing worthily
May likewise love Thee for the same again,
And for Thy sake that all lyke dear didst buy
With love may one another entertayne.
So let us love, dear Love, lyke as we ought,
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

It would be hard to surpass this in simple purity and dignity in spite of the rhyme. It is truly addressed to heaven and savors of its divine

inspiration in spirit and form, like those most beautiful of all prayers, the collects of the English Prayer-book.

There is another of Spenser's beginning:

Fresh spring, the herald of love's mighty King,

which we should love to quote here to show how fresh and sweet and virile even the love sonnets would become in the hands of the fresh, sweet, strong man; but we must pass it by, as well as that splendid one of Drayton's, which is in the true Shakesperian form, though antedating Shakespeare, and is almost heart-breaking in its passionate pathos:

Since there is no help, come let us kiss and part.

These all show that Shakespeare did not originate the form of his sonnets, though he did set his seal thereto, and that it is called interchangeably Shakesperian or English is rather a tribute to this genius. I am tempted just here to quote a bit from that warmest of advocates of the English form, Theodore Watts, to show in a nutshell the *raison d'être* of the English model. We may or may not agree with it, but it settles forever its standing in the sonnet world.

"The quest of the Shakesperian form is not, like that of the sonnet of the octave and sestet, sonority and, so to speak, metrical counterpoint, but sweetness; and the sweetest of all possible arrangements in English versification is a succession of decasyllabic quatrains in alternate

rhymes, knit together and clenched by a couplet, a couplet coming not too far from the initial verse so as to lose its binding power, and yet not so near that the ring of the epigram disturbs the linked sweetness long drawn out of this movement, but sufficiently near to shed its influence over the poem back to its initial verse."

Nothing could be better expressed than this, and although we may very humbly disagree with it, its claims could not be more soundly presented. But we are sure that Mr. Watts himself would agree that a great deal more than sweetness is sought and found in the Shakesperian sonnets. The truth is that form and dress are not of paramount importance in a master hand. They are inexpressibly helpful when one needs help, as almost every one does, and as Shakespeare did not.

I am not going to discuss the various theories of Shakespeare's sonnets. They are all guess-work, and not pleasant guess-work, and lead the guessers sometimes to disavow the whole series and wish they had never been written. I prefer to do my own guessing, which may as well be right as another's, and will at least leave me in possession of this enchanting, incomparable, and inexhaustible literature. We are not going to say all that we think of these poems, lest we should be thought not to have learned the moderation and self-restraint taught by our subject, but simply pass in review our favorites and let them speak for themselves. Contrasting

harmoniously with the Dante sonnet on his lady is the one beginning:

> Shall I compare thee to a summer's day,
> Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

And how tender and beautiful it makes this when you feel that it is applied to the beauty of age rather than that of youth, which every poet sings. Not long ago I met a gracious old lady whose eighty summers had passed lightly over her head, leaving her still beautiful, and I felt that the next lines were meant for her:

> Rough winds may shake the darling buds of May—
> . . . . . .
> But thy eternal summer shall not fade
> Nor lose possession of that fair thou own'st.

If this sonnet was not written to an old lady, it certainly contemplated with happy satisfaction the graces that years would bring to its subject, whose eternal youth it handed down in the poet's eternal lines. That is a very comforting expression also which we find for wrinkles in another place, where time is spoken of as

> Delving parallels in Beauty's brow.

One would n't mind a few wrinkles if they were only parallels in Beauty's brow. I think Shakespeare is always very tender in his feeling toward age. He could not himself have been very old, though, when he writes what we may almost call the old men's sonnet, for it is full of the sweetest and saddest pictures of age. I think

we must have this sonnet entire, for it is its whole structure that gives it its exquisite beauty, as well as its single lines, and the tender lesson which it teaches. You will notice how the light fades steadily away through it all, like the fading life which it portrays. In the first quatrain you have the fading daylight of an autumn afternoon out in Nature's great temple—the woods. Then the afternoon fades into the twilight, which dies away into black night, with the last glow of the dying fires of youth—these melancholy pictures all emphasizing the thought that love must be all the stronger since it can last so little time:

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou seest the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the West;
Which bye and bye black night doth take away,
Death's second self that seals up all in rest.
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed by that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceiv'st which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

Who can be a stranger to Shakespeare any longer when he has opened his heart to us like this; and the strong and sweet part of it all is that whatever chord he strikes we find a

response in our hearts. In unlocking his own heart he unlocks ours also. Wait till you get a bit older and see how all these pictures of fading youth appeal to you. And so of many another line.

> Tired of all these for restful death I cry,

is in many a heart, which, however, knows not how to give it expression; and the indictment which follows against the world we live in would be almost too disheartening, if 't were not for the inimitable tenderness of the closing couplet:

> Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
> Save that to die, I leave my love alone.

Then there is the sweet alliterative spell of the sonnet beginning,

> When to the sessions of sweet, silent thought,

where all the sorrows of his life (and ours) are called to remembrance, and he mourns as though never before

> Precious friends hid in death's dateless night.

And when we are turning away with breaking hearts a sweet comfort breaks upon us:

> But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
> All losses are restored and sorrows end.

What a wonderful want of self-appreciation and unconsciousness of true genius we find in the one beginning:

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes.

Imagine Shakespeare desiring this man's art and that man's scope, as though all arts and all possession were not already his. The structure of this sonnet is very fine, too; for, after enumerating in the first eight lines his sad estate and all his vain desires, there comes a pause and the whole thing changes to a note of triumph and elation:

Haply I think on thee and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate.
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

I am not so fond of the sonnet which is, perhaps, a more universal favorite than some which I have quoted, beginning:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments.

Truly the sentiment is noble and fine, and the last lines, which tell in ringing tones what true love is, are very lovely. But "admit impediments" is an awkward phrase, having a legal sound, which disenchants one at the beginning, and there is n't room for vicissitudes of emotion in fourteen lines. And so the one,

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,

which contains that wonderful line,

And death once dead, there's no more dying then—

we shall pass over for want of time, although it is thought by many to be of surpassing interest as containing Shakespeare's own spiritual experiences. But it is sad and sorry, and we must leave ourselves time for that one which we said in the early part of our paper we should class with Dante's as making the two most perfect sonnets—*to our taste*. This is the one which, since we have given it so notable a place, we must quote entire. I learned it many years ago, and I can truly say that it has been ever since a crown on the brow of every day which I have met, like those it described, and you will all recognize these so typical New England autumn days:

Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy—
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to West with this disgrace;
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my soul no whit disdaineth,
Suns of the world may stain, when Heaven's sun staineth.

I think that the picture contained in the second line of this poem is perhaps the most beautiful that poet ever conceived. It contains nothing

less than the great mountain tops over all the world, being roused from their night of clouds and darkness by the great golden eye of their sovereign sun, all their dim, dark valleys and mossy glens uncovered and flooded with light by the great Flatterer, who showed them beauties unknown even to themselves before; and the rest of the picture, where he kisses the meadows and turns the dark streams to gold, puts us in a kind of ecstacy, which hardly prepares us for the impending gloom—when ugly clouds arise and our glorious day goes down in darkness. And then the application. Who that has lived his scores of years does not respond to its melancholy?—

> E 'en so, my sun one early morn did shine,
> With all triumphant splendor on my brow.

Who of us has not seen some glorious morning sun full of hope and fond anticipation go down at noon and leave us hidden in the region cloud? Happy souls if we meet our disappointment with the sweet reasonableness of the poet:

> Suns of the world may stain, when Heaven's sun staineth.

Yes, I am sure that in beauty of structure, in nobility of sentiment, in picturesqueness and consummate lordliness of expression, this sonnet ranks with Dante's, and it will be hard to find the third.

But we must not look any longer to Shake-

speare, but leave him with his beauties half told, because this paper is on Sonnets, not Shakespeare; moreover, our favorite critic on sonnets tells us that none of Shakespeare's can be admitted among the first, because of their imperfection of form. Besides, we have Milton and Wordsworth and Rossetti, and hosts of minor poets yet to consider. Dr. Johnson said of Milton that he could not write sonnets. He could hew Colossus out of the rocks, but he could n't carve heads on a cherry-stone—to which witticism there are two answers. Sonnets are cameo miniatures, on ivory, if you like, but not cherry-stones. And then, if they are little, it must be remembered that it was the Master Hand which set the stars in their courses and formed the mountains in their majesty and might, who also made the microscopic beauties of flower and leaf and insect. Certainly in his hands the sonnet changed its nature. He could n't devote it to the dainty eyes and lips of his mistress, and so "he caught it from the dainty hands of love, who wept to lose it, and gave the notes to glory," or, as Wordsworth says inimitably, in his hands

> The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
> Soul animating strains, alas! too few.

Certainly his themes are lofty and often sad. Three of the sonnets we owe to his blindness. One of those to Cyriac Skinner, has a noble, inspiriting cheeriness about it, unlike the deep

pathos of that on his blindness, which breaks our heart in spite of his bravery. But its glory is its marvellous insight into what constitutes the service of God, a lesson which we had thought was the need of our own age. But perhaps it is all ages and human nature that needs it.

> God doth not need
> Either man's work or His own gifts; who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve Him best; His state
> Is kingly, thousands at His bidding speed
> And post o 'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait.

An immortal line, this last, whose truth has become of such universal apprehension that we are fain to forget the blind poet, to whose disciplined soul and keen vision we owe it. In the lovely sonnet to his dead wife, it is as a blind man that he writes:

> Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight
> Love, sweetness, goodness in her person shined,
> So clear as in no face with more delight,
> But oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
> I waked—she fled—and day brought back my night.

The "collect in verse," as Macaulay called the sonnet so familiar to us all on the massacre of the Waldenses, is pronounced by Palgrave to be the most mighty poem in any language which he knows; and since there is no gainsaying the judgment of such an one, we must think so too. Truly the trumpet-notes which ring out for

justice on the slayers of God's martyred saints are clear and strong, and we are carried along as by a flood by the deep passion with which in a few masterly strokes he depicts, first, the simple life of those "who kept God's faith so pure of old," and then their unmerited sufferings whose "moans the vales redoubled to the hills, and they to heaven." "But vengeance is mine, and I will repay," saith the Lord, and this collect seems to us to savor more of the Old Testament spirit than the New. And, perhaps because the subjects are more grateful to us, we really, if the truth were told, like better three other sonnets than this: one on the nightingale, one on a virtuous young lady, and one to Mrs. Thompson. In them all we find the same lofty view. It is as though his vision were never beclogged or bemired by earthly sights, and it was given to his blind eyes to see the landscapes of Heaven from the ramparts of earth. The last one of these three is so beautiful that I should like to quote it entire, for it is not easy to separate it.

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou did'st resign this earthly load
Of death, called life; which thee from life doth sever.
Thy works and alms and all thy good endeavor
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss forever.
Love led them on, and Faith who knew them best,
Thy handmaids, clad them o 'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,

And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes,
Before the Judge, who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure, immortal streams.

Could there be a more beautiful sermon on the blessedness of the life of faith, or, rather, a life whose faith was crowned by works? It might pass for a lovely elucidation of those wonderful verses which have always a mystic spell about them from the mystery and far-awayness: "And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me: 'Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit; that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.'" I am sure that Milton, who was a wonderful plagiarist—his memory was stocked so full that he could n't help it, —I am sure that he had these verses in his mind when he wrote this sonnet, and I wish he had named it by them, instead of *On the Religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thompson, my Christian friend, deceased, September 16*, etc. This jars a little on our fastidious ears; though I suppose it was after the manner of his times, to which Milton emphatically belonged. To tell the truth, I love Milton better everywhere else than as a sonneteer. I say it modestly, knowing that I am on the wrong side of the question in the judgment of most of the critics. But however simple or lofty he was in his subjects and in his outlook, his diction had little in it of simplicity or of self-restraint, and he would not have been at his best if it had. He could

not count his epithets and leave out those that were not needed. Rather he loved to revel in the wealth of their abundance, to run riot in the wilderness that his imagination supplied to him; in the blissful Paradise, garden of God, in whose delicious glades and bowers and on whose trees bloomed ambrosial fruit, while

> The crisped brooks,
> Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
> Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
> Flow'rs, worthy of Paradise.
> . . . . . .
>
> Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
> Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
> Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
> Luxuriant.

This description from *Paradise Lost* savors not at all of the severe simplicity of the sonnet, but rather of the lavish luxury of a rich imagination, which must spend itself and admits of no restraint. And so, unlike Wordsworth, we are glad that he gave us his odes and his elegies rather than more sonnets.

For a long time after Milton there seems to have been no very great sonneteer till Wordsworth, though all the poets wrote them, and some of them are really beautiful, and in passing them over we know that we are leaving many a lovely flower ungathered. Coleridge, supreme metrist as he was, refused their fetters; and Shelley, too; and so *Work without Hope* and *Ozymandias*, both splendid poems, leave much

to be desired in form. Sometime in this period appeared, however, that masterpiece of Blanco White's on *Night*, which both Coleridge and Leigh Hunt—in fact, all the critics—agree to call the most grandly conceived sonnet in our language. There is a good deal of mystery attending it. Its effect on first reading is immense. The perfection of its form and the majesty of its sentiment rather overwhelm us; but the impression does not stay by us—the heart has not been touched. And it lies back in our memory without much fire or warmth. And then again its author never wrote anything else that we can discover, except one other sonnet, *On being Called Aged at Fifty*, a poem as striking as one would expect from its title. Was Blanco White then really a poet, or was he only poetized for a few transcendent minutes when this thought came to him, and in a moment of white heat he gave it utterance? It is familiar—yet I will read it; and when I do so, you would doubtless feel its spell, and then to-night, if you remembered it, you would find the spell broken and fall to wondering with me what is its mystery.

Mysterious night! when our first parent knew
  Thee from divine report, and heard thy name,
  Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet, 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
  Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
  Hesperus with the Host of Heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened on Man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find,
While fly and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can so deceive, wherefore not Life?

We would also call your attention to the beautiful work of Hartley Coleridge, who certainly surpassed his more gifted father in sonnet writing. The one on *The Birth of Speech* especially is full of the loveliest pictures; and there is another of Aubrey de Vere's on *Sorrow*, which every one should know who does not, for its mild and gentle dignity. But we can't quote them or talk them over, for Wordsworth awaits us, and without more delay we must enter what we were going to call his majestic, but we will say, rather, his voluminous, presence. Certainly the sonnet was made for Wordsworth. Oh, if he had only thought so when he wrote *Peter Bell!* In his sonnets he is freer than anywhere else from his besetting sins; for in them he is forced to be concise and dignified. True, he wrote the ecclesiastical sonnets and the long series on the river Duddon. Of the former we can only say that if the reader will be patient and read a few of them, well selected, he will find among all their superfluous twaddle a sweet air of serenity and many rare and beautiful gems of thought. And if the vision and the faculty divine sometimes went to sleep and left him talking, one is always sure that, sooner or later, he will come

unto his own again. And then, at his best, who compares with him? Who else has his passionate fervor? Who else is so divine an interpreter of nature's parables—finding in them always, like a true lover, the still, sad music of humanity? Read the last of the ecclesiastical sonnets and you will see what I mean. It is on Monte Rosa, and in it the mountain, with its snow-crowned summit, all in the glory of the setting sun, is taken as a symbol of the Incarnation; and later on, in the sestet, the Christian who is more and more bathed in the light of Heaven as the night of death approaches. I should like to quote it entire, for in no other way can you get a real idea of it.

Glory to God, and to the Power who came,
  In filial duty, clothed with love divine;
  That made His human tabernacle shine
Like ocean burning with purpureal flame,
Or like the Alpine Mount that takes its name
  From roseate hues, far kenned at morn and even,
  In hours of peace, or when the storm is driven
Along the nether regions, rugg'd frame!
Earth prompts—Heaven urges; let us seek the light,
  Studious of that pure intercourse begun
When first our infant brows their lustre won;
So, like the Mountain, may we grow more bright,
  From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,
At the approach of all-involving night.

The transcendent beauty of these last lines, in which the dying Christian is more and more flooded with the light of Heaven at the approach of the all-involving night of death, as the moun-

tain is more glorious in the rays of the setting sun, cannot be equalled. It is a divine vision, and every word that we say about it takes away from its simple splendor. But learn it, and you will possess something which will often add beauty to many a beautiful scene, and maybe sometime will prove a key to unlock that longing sense of mystery, with which nature often possesses us. Decidedly we take it for our third most beautiful sonnet. We have spoken of the sonnets on the river Duddon, and here we must confess that it is only very lately that we have mastered this lovely series. It is not that they are difficult; but there are so many of them, and, besides, we found it a little irritating that the poet should have found a way of circumventing the very idea of the sonnet and introducing his everlasting prolixity where conciseness and brevity were meant to be supreme. But we did the poet injustice. The sonnets to the river Duddon express a series of emotions experienced by him as he follows the little river from its source, where it was a "cradled nursling of the mountain, robed in garb of snow-white foam."

Very dexterously he interweaves sweet experiences of his own life with the course of the river, "loitering and dreaming though the swift stream chides," as it grows insensibly into a brook of loud and stately march; and then, like a Bacchanal, it leaps from rock to rock, until finally the majestic river sinks in powerless

sleep in the bosom of the great ocean. And all this onflowing and growing of the river is full of the loveliest pictures of nature and of human nature. The verse takes its tune and time from the picture, and, really, as your eye glances at each sonnet, you can tell almost at a glance what form the brook or the musings are taking on. It ends in a great, broad swing, leaving us quietly on the bosom of the ocean into which it emptied itself.

And the poet finds the lesson of it all in the last sonnet:

Still glides the stream, and shall forever glide,
The Form remains, the Function never dies,
While we the brave, the mighty and the wise,
We men who in our morn of youth defied
  The elements, must vanish; be it so;
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live and act and serve the future hour,
  And if as toward the silent tomb we go
Through love, through hope and Faith's transcendent
      dower,
  We feel that we are greater than we know.

But perhaps we have given too much time to these series while leaving untouched the whole world—and it is a world, and a thickly peopled world, too—of the miscellaneous sonnets. But it is because they were newer to us, and never because we do not love best to wander in the dear, old, familiar garden, whose every rose is more lovely because it lies in our memory with the rosy hues of association. But what can we

do in such a wilderness of beauty, such an embarrassment of riches? Gather them all we cannot, gather even our favorites we cannot, especially since our favorite is always the last one that we read. We cannot even open the chapel door of memory and bring out all that we have gathered therein, and our task seems hopeless. Fortunately, in Wordsworth, as well as in Dante Gabriel Rossetti, we find the sonnet full of epigrammatic lines, strenuous maxims, which can stand alone. And we may gather here and there a gem and leave out its surroundings. But the sonnet on *The Imagination* is not one of these. We need all the fourteen lines to get the full strength of its sound philosophy and its sweet wisdom:

Weak is the will of man, his judgment blind,
  Remembrance persecutes and hope betrays,
Heavy is woe, and joy for human kind
  A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze.
  Thus might he paint our lot of mortal days,
Who wants the glorious faculty assigned
To elevate the more than reasoning mind,
  And color life's dark cloud with orient rays, etc.

It would be only just to give this sonnet entire, if we had time, for it might be read as a tribute to Wordsworth himself, being emphatically what he does for us all—beside one more office which he has omitted to assign to his great comforter, that of glorifying the commonplace. It is the lot of so many people in the world to be not dignified by great sorrows or

trials, but to be just surrounded forever by the dull and the commonplace; and to such Wordsworth does come with a healing power. He can throw a glamour over the dullest life and make the desert blossom like the rose, because he had that glorious faculty assigned

> To color life's dark cloud with orient rays.

But he halted sometimes, and I am so bold as to wish that in

> The beauteous evening calm and free

he had not relegated the dear girl who walked with him to Abraham's bosom. It may seem a puerile criticism in the presence of such glorious descriptions of land and sea as are in this sonnet; but all the same, it jars, and it is not defence enough to say that it is the language of the day. The great poet does not belong to his day, but to ours and to every one's day. And it would have been so much more obvious to have said something like this, "Thou standest in God's presence all the year," for that is what he really meant, and not the other.

What a splendid clarion note he sounds in the sonnet in which with Miltonic force he declares that he would rather be a heathen than a modern business man! That is the prose of it, though in its lovely poetic dress it finds place for such gems as this:

> The winds that would be howling at all hours
> And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers.

Instinctively one's utterance goes softly and tenderly. I am so glad that Wordsworth wrote this sonnet. It has a note of indignant protest in it that makes one feel that he might almost have been wrought to deeds of violence, though we doubt if anything could have made him a pagan, or ever have severed his worship of nature from his love of Heaven. This sonnet—it begins:

The world is too much with us—

and the one on *Westminster Bridge* are, I think, absolutely perfect in form and expression. Not a word—a syllable, a vowel—is unnecessary to sound as well as rhythm, and the thought lies imbedded in its mould, like a beautiful polished stone in a stream of amber clearness, or like a precious gem which exactly fits its rich casket, and we know not which is the more perfect, the gem or its setting.

The sonnets on *London in 1802* are full of strong lines which belong to us all now, but which broke on the world at first with the power of a new thought. Of these are:

Plain living and high thinking are no more.

. . . . . .

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:

. . . . . .

Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free.

And again:

> We must be free or die who speak the tongue
> That Shakespeare spoke; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held.

And again:

> By the soul,
> Only, the nations shall be great and free.

They are all

> Thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
> That they were born for Immortality.

They are voices in favor of the sonnet, because they could hardly be lost in so small an envelope, whereas imbedded in some greater mass they would easily have become only faintly visible. And what a miracle the sonnet wrought in Wordsworth when it made him compress into its narrow limits so much as he has in his two historical sonnets, which we must only allude to? I mean the one translating the speech of the grand old Saxon king:

> Man's life is like a sparrow, mighty King.

The whole illustration here is one to Wordsworth's own heart. He loved so to use all the sights and sounds of nature in parable; I am sure that if he and the old Saxon have met, it was as brothers—to thank each other, the one for his parable and the other for its beautiful expression. The one to Canute the King is

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almost as beautiful, though perhaps there is in this a little too much moral for the picture. I wonder if the proportion would have been improved at all; if Rossetti could have given to Wordsworth a little sensuousness, and received from him in return a little of that vision which saw into "the ampler ether, the diviner air." These distinctions are very subtle, and it may be that we cannot suggest to nature any improvements in her compositions. Even if we can they will not avail, and we must be satisfied with our poets as they are. Certainly no two could differ in nature more than these two, only agreeing in that they were both consummate sonneteers. And Rossetti's work, too, is full of strong and beautiful lines, which stand alone and fasten themselves in the memory:

> How should I reach so far who cannot weigh
> To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday.

And

> Look in my face. My name is Might-have-been.

And those exquisite lines which open the sestet in the sonnet on *True Woman:*

> The sunrise blooms and withers on the hill
> Like any hillflower; and the noblest troth,
> Dies here to dust.

And what a world of longing is in the first line of this same sonnet:

> If to grow old in Heaven, is to grow young,
> As the seer saw and said.

But after all, no isolated lines, however true and ringing they may be, can give any idea of the mellow music of Rossetti's sonnets. They constitute—what shall I say? A gorgeous picture gallery full of splendid gloom. The color is magnificent, but never dazzling. It would be gay with sunshine, but the light falls always through great sombre trees, and would be shadows in other hands, and the air throughout is full of murmuring minor cadences, not music, only the whole quivering atmosphere seems singing. I don't know how to describe these sonnets in ordinary language. Their effect upon us is marvellous, for he is master of his art. But is he painter or poet or songster? He seems to be all three, but whether he paints or writes or sings, it is always in the twilight. No cheerful daylight illumines his work. True, I remember that glowing sestet in Sonnet No. 30 of *The House of Life:*

> Many the days that winter keeps in store
> Sunless throughout, or whose brief sun-glimpses
> Scarce shed the heaped snow through the naked trees;
> This day at least was summer's paramour,
> Sun colored to the imperishable core
> With sweet well-being of Love and full Heart's ease.

But, after all, the daylight here is an affair of memory, not present possession; for

> Mutual dreams the bygone bliss retrieve.

There is a glimmer of cold light in the sonnet on *Winter* which has a gloomy glow about it, truly

Rossettian—a robin for the rose that could not be:

How large that thrush looks on the bare thorn tree.
  A swarm of such, three little months ago,
  Had hidden in the leaves and let none know
Save by the outburst of their minstrelsy,
A white flake here and there—a snow lily
  Of last night's frost—our naked flower beds hold,
  And for a rose flower on the darkling mould
A hungry red breast gleams—no bloom, no bee.

One has only to close one's eyes to see the picture. Nay, in writing about them one forgets whether one is writing of poems or of pictures, and there is brain work, too. The intellectual power is equal to the sensuous imagery. I shall not quote from the one—No. 86, I think it is, of *The House of Life*—which Rossetti himself and many critics think one of his best. It is on *Lost Days*, and is so terrible in its spiritual significance that it would fill our whole hour with gloom and make us afraid to ever waste one minute of day that might meet us hereafter with so terrible a greeting. But it is not stimulating. It only makes us want to run away. And so we will, and betake ourselves to the gallery of black and white which belongs to Matthew Arnold. Here we have no color, perhaps it is predicating too much picturesqueness to call it even black and white. Rather it is a splendid array of sparkling crystals, and in each is crystallized a noble ethical sentiment. They appeal to the heart, the soul, the intellect—anything

rather than the senses. Here is sunshine, but it falls on no glowing landscape, but on lofty peaks and crystal summits; and by its light a man might live and die and never be led astray by any gay siren of pleasure. It is Alpine glaciers rather than Italian gardens. There are not many of them, and we should love to read them all, for each has a different voice; but we must let one speak for the whole, and, though it may not be my favorite, I think I will choose the one on *Immortality*, as sounding, perhaps, the most characteristic note of them all:

> Foiled by our fellow-men, depress'd, outworn,
> We leave the brutal world to take its way,
> And, Patience! in another life, we say
> The World shall be thrust down, and we upborne.
> And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
> The World's poor routed leavings? or will they
> Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day
> Support the fervors of the heavenly morn?
> No, No! the energy of life may be
> Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
> And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,
> From strength to strength advancing—only he,
> His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
> Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

Believe this or repudiate it as you will, it is certainly a vision seen from the mountain-tops. And here, on this lofty peak, we must leave our subject. We have opened only a few of the doors nine and ninety that spring open before us; and from a mine of almost inexhaustible wealth we have selected only a few of the gems

that seemed to sparkle most brilliantly at our approach. But the mine remains, and if, moreover, our mood shall change, we shall find something to suit it. Every day would disclose new beauties, for there is something there to suit every taste. But if you don't like any of them, I can only say that, unlike some tastes, it is one that can be cultivated. And it will repay the trouble. It is such a short and easy road to endless possessions—possessions which, when we have made them our own, no vicissitudes can take from us. They will rather belong to that happy time coming to us all, when our mind shall have become a museum for all lovely forms; our memory a dwelling-place for all sweet sonnets and harmonies. And in that happy time we shall find that

> These sweet lines remembered such wealth brings
> That then we 'll scorn to change our state with kings.

LETTERS

LEAMINGTON, ENGLAND, 1889

LAST Sunday we went to Whitnash to church. About twenty people stayed to the communion service and the church was silent as the grave. The minister had a most cultivated tone and accent, and a slow, resigned way of reading that seemed to me the very acme of pathos. It was all so hopeless. I began to live over all the sadness of my own life, and to look forward to the possibles for me and mine that lie before me—till I felt that I must shriek aloud or fly up and beat the ceiling, or do something wild to break the spell. But the hopeless voice went on calmly and resignedly. No matter what the words were, the tone said, "What's the use of kicking, nothing makes any difference. See me—I go on and on always the same—everything is always the same. Men come and go, but they are all alike, and the same trees and walls and skies and suns are over and about us." And so

NOTE.—All these letters except the two last were written to a schoolmate and very dear kinswoman.

I was glad when the quiet little service was over and we all came decorously out, as quiet as lambs. Do you think I was the only slumbering volcano there?

I don't know whether I like England or not. London is grimy and gloomy—a sort of charnel house. We were dragged from one "remains" to another till I could weep no more. Of course it was vastly interesting, but I do like things to be pretty and gay. I do so intensely long to be very happy and to have the children gay and happy. To love and to be happy — is n't that the whole duty of man?

The Venus of Milo does for me. It seems as though the image of her heavenly, tranquil, sweet calm could calm my most feverish minutes. She was far above what my fancy had painted. And next to her the snow Alps—in England the Lake country.

FARMINGTON, CONN., June, 1890.

I think something is going to happen—perhaps I 'm going to be translated, for I feel like writing letters, and I have n't before for ten years! Seems to me I never before knew the transport of trees and flowers and grass and blue sky, and rivers bluer than the sky, and happy, loving little children. I think I have gotten to hate *books—Nature* is the best friend—the *Heal all.* "T is her privilege in all the years of this our life, to lead from joy to joy." I do believe that if just now I had n't been able to kneel at her

altars, I should have become a hypochondriac or something worse.

. . . . . .

This is the funniest little village! The only pretty place I ever found in Connecticut. I never saw such rank foliage or such lovely tumbling streams or so many wild flowers. The long village street is dark at high noon from the shade of great trees, which meet over one's head *high up* in the air, and all around the broad valley in which the village lies are the blue distant hills in many ranges. It seems like "the happy village," and one does not want to know how to get out. Then the big feature of the place is Miss Porter's school—which has been here for so many, many years, and has had a most refining influence on the whole people. She herself is a giant of her race, a kind of a *prophetess of old;* keeping her strength of body and mind most wonderfully. She has put her stamp on all the village, is a patriarch among them, bearing their burdens, knowing all their sorrows—has had hundreds of girls, and turned them all out "gentlewomen," and this she says is her aim, even if they don't know anything. How does she do it all? I just don't know and want to find out. She has decision enough in her character if not in her manner. I want to study her, but the facilities are not excellent, and I am afraid she won't respond. I should like some lectures from her on the subject of education—about which I get daily more confused. *Is* there

any one in all the world who knows anything about the subject? I want an education for my girls that will teach them to keep house easily and gracefully, to dress beautifully, to be courteous and agreeable to strangers and loving and thoughtful for their friends, to love nature and art, to be interested in science and politics, and in a world full of conundrums to sail quietly along without getting puzzled. I want their interest to be lively in everything, and their capacity for adaptation to surrounding circumstances to be easy and natural. This is n't asking much, but I don't know any one that teaches who aims at it.

My dear Friend—
Are there not two ways
in the which a man may
walk—Behold I set them
before you.

ONE WAY.

A noble luxurious hotel in
the midst of the gay world of
fashion.
A dinner of stalled ox,
noiseless waiters in white
gloves and matchless decorum—
No hours to keep—but
Time unbounded and unmarked
leaving.
Perfect freedom for all one's
movements.
Ceremonious calls—on relations "not at home."
Estranged hearts and old friendships forever
severed.

A simple modest home in a rural
part of the City.
Dinner of herbs—frugal but wholesome.
Superannuated waitress who is
yet harmless being blind and
deaf.
Breakfast at 8—dinner at 6
and church daily at half past 4.
Some little—very little restraint
demanded by the laws of courtesy.
Intercourse of soul with soul—
Notes exchanged on familiar
domestic conundrums—
Friendship cemented and hearts
warmed and refreshed by love.

All of which is respectfully submitted to the tune of "Should Auld Acquaintance be forget."

Hoping to hear something sensible from you, I remain,

Yours as yet,

L. L. W.

Easter, 1892.

Well—are n't you glad that Easter comes in the spring with the buds and the blossoms? It does seem as though everything must be made alive, and you could n't draw that moral with autumn leaves around. I have never had so much pleasure from anything as from the flowers this spring. They are so beautiful. True they are a little mixed up with millinery and commercialism, but that is only in the shops, and really I think they are the greatest

ameliorative that life has. Sha'n't we sometime and somewhere have a happy time in some rosy plain where we can sit at leisure in flowery places, and talk of big things that have nothing to do with the accidents of life?

. . . . . .

As for philanthropy—well, I thought I had a lot to say about it. I had when I read your letter. But since I began the sentence I have been looking up into the sky and the clouds, and they have put me all off the scent, and I guess that religion and philosophy are easier than philanthropy. Work is the only answer to most conundrums anyway. Plenty of good wholesome work and bodily exercise—develop all the muscles and let the soul and the mind a good deal alone. The glorification of work—making it all art, that is, "doing what you do in the very best manner in which it can be done," and the criminality of poor and cheap work—ah! what a gospel that would be—now would n't it—and if there is another life coming to us all what would—what must fit us so well for it as *good* work, now—the best development of all our faculties?

CONVENT DE ST. LOUANS,
PRÉS CHINON,
INDRE ET LOIRE,
FRANCE.
July 19, 1897.

Here we are—in this queer, little, old, old town—full to overflowing of history, of old bones,

and of Plantagenet dust. We have underneath our convent the bones of old saints who died centuries ago, and nuns and novices flit all around the gardens; and, joy to say, a few monks wander around reading holy books and peeping out of the corners of their eyes when we get into their way, as we take pains to do. The gardens are very large and full of all sorts of flowers—familiar and strange. Cedars of Lebanon and stiffly trimmed lime trees make shade and nice walks for us. Away down at one's feet the pretty Vienne curves in and out of green meadows away down as far as we can see in the pretty valley. The sunsets are gorgeous, reflected in its dark waters, and we have been having rival splendors in a big, full moon, that has made our evenings so far really enchanting. There are innumerable birds which sing all day long, and yet it is n't Paradise. Perhaps it might be with plenty of sapolio, and yet sapolio would not fit in very well. The grand old château—really the most imposing one we have seen in a way—would n't be any better for scrubbing, and it might fall to pieces. It is superb—the situation so commanding, the outlines so harmonious, and the whole quite awe inspiring. We study nothing but French history, and really you dear ones on the other side of the water seem almost farther away than the Henris and the Louises and the Charleses whose ghostly forms seem all around us. This was the favorite château of Henri II. (Plantagenet) and

here he died in his sorrows and was buried at Fontevrault near by. All the country just teems with these old stories, and if it did not teem as well with what we call jocularly "les petits oiseaux de France" we should be happier.

July 26, 1897.

You seem so much nearer than the other folk across the water. I am perfectly amazed at my power of forgetfulness. I have to pull myself up to remember who I am—or was in my "ain countree"—so different and so absorbing is life here. Not that it is so interesting, but it is all so consistent, and we read it in our books and try to talk it with our lips and altogether are absolutely a part of it. For they don't change any of their ways at this old convent for us, and 't is we who have to change everything.

. . . . . .

Your letter from London stimulated me and the next day after it I walked 14 kilometers with Lorraine to the little village of Rivières—where there is a twelfth century old church. We got there just in time for a twelfth century funeral—which was sad enough, for it was that of a young girl, and I don't know why she should have died, for apparently she had never any life. But her death was a great event for the village; only, poor thing! she could know nothing about it—probably the only thing that ever happened to her! The whole village were there in long mourning robes, and if it had not been so

shiveringly pathetic, it would have been strikingly picturesque. The church was most curious and interesting; but then, this country is full of them, and they all slumber and sleep away with the centuries—which do manage to slip away, but leave no mark behind them—and I don't believe that 1997—no—what is it?—17—no—1897 is in anywise different from 1297—except that some little girls have had their funerals, while others are waiting for them.

There is but one really vital power in France—yes, two—the Jesuits—I had forgotten them—and the—there 's one biting me this minute. Ah, how active they are—I think they are Protestants.

AMHERST, MASS., September, 1898.

Everett has just spent ten days with us, ten quiet, gentle, misty days; when the clouds lay too near the earth for much adventure, and so we read and walked and drove a little. Monday we drove all day long from nine o'clock until five-thirty—over the hills and through the woods in a blaze of splendid color. I felt as though I had been swimming in a sea of La Farge color all day long, and went to sleep in a sea of splendor. Perhaps when one has only one such day in a summer, one appreciates it all the more. It is my one summer day so far, and stays by me all the time, flashing upon my inward eye, whenever it turns in on itself. Is n't it wonderful what a wealth of splendid

color there is in the world! That 's my principal reflection from this summer so far.

Now it is just after breakfast, and I 've been arranging the loads and loads of asters with which our parlor is filled, and then I have come out on the doorstep, which is flooded in sunshine and feels like Heaven this frosty morning, and the asters and the sunshine have filled my soul, and made me feel like writing to you. I have been rather cross and out of sorts this last two months, and now right here, in the broad light of day, I want to make a firm resolution—to wit—that I 'll be patient and cheerful all the rest of the days of my pilgrimage on this terrestrial ball—and if ever you hear that I have arrived at patience and cheerfulness, then dear, you may be sure that the end is not far off, and vacation at hand. Ah! but are n't the asters lovely! I have never seen them so gay before; they are like great tall snow bushes, so white, and some are like bushes twinkling full of stars, and there are lavender ones and royal purple ones, and even pink ones, and I have yards and yards of them in our gay parlor.—I am convinced that the whole philosophy of life is just "Be patient," and at all events, "Be jolly," or, at least, "Be cheerful," and "Don't theorize"; and so I 'll not do any speculating or theorizing, and you should see how cheerful I am. Don't you feel me laugh! It seems to me that modern art teaching is only adapted to antediluvian lives.

It is like modern whist—a splendid way of playing if the game lasted a month. If life were forever, then you could afford to go plodding along, refusing to gather any flowers by the way till you had reached your goal, and expect to make bouquets forever. But I don't believe that any woman can ever reach the point they aim at, and so their whole lives are to be spent reaching for something they can't grasp, and being discouraged and discontented with themselves. Why would n't it be better to give and take pleasure en route as —— did? —— says, "Of course we don't paint pictures for the outside world. We don't expect it to understand us."

Now, if that is so, what is the use of art? Is it only for the benefit of the artist himself, and a little bit of a clique who can alone understand him? — that seems to me rather narrow — too narrow for an aim. However, I am all in the dark. I don't know where and how I am to get light, if they who have it say it isn't for such as I. —— has a certain irritating air of perfect attainment. If I could whisper in your ear, I 'd say it was just a little vulgar, as though you need no longer look up to anything henceforth. You had only to look around.

E. finds great comfort in her art work. No, give me Art every time, that is a search after the soul of things that satisfies, even in the search. That is a good, healthy religion.

Do you know I think this country life with so

much time for thinking is vastly unwholesome. I shall be so glad to get back to life and work. I want to have so much to do, that I can just jump from one thing to another without even considering.

I have been reading like thunder this week —Zola, Darwin, Tennyson (Life, etc.). I began *Paris* and found it too frenchy to suit me, and so took *The Origin*, etc., as an antidote, and we are reading Tennyson aloud with all the poems we don't know very well interlarded. I have finished Zola and Darwin—am not pleased with the former, and am more than ever enchanted with the Darwin. It 's good for one's soul to read an old book like this, which has become mighty and prevailed, and note how modestly and honestly he puts forth his ideas and their objections. Really it seems as though D. may be right when he says Darwin is the only man in the world who tells the truth. Of course all his surmises are now not even matter for speculation, and I suppose are read by scientific men merely as ancient history. But the lovely tone of them will always be an object lesson for students. It was an excellent antidote to Zola—who is stimulating too in a way. But his *method* is so different. Darwin would have gone to all the priests and scientists and politicians and courtesans and studied each of them for years before trying to depict what they really were. Zola makes a lot of lay figures—labels them, and then puts into the mouth of each what he wants

them to say. It is all Zola and he has n't a single character, certainly in *Paris*, and consequently is not at all convincing.

71ST STREET AND PARK AVE., June, 1900.

I 'm all ready to go and it isn't time yet. So I 'll send you just a word of farewell. It has been a nightmare of a week. The heat—the dust—the noise—the poor wretched, suffering people and animals around me. Our house is so big and shady and airy that we can't suffer; but it makes me feel wicked to have it so comfortable, and really and truly I hate to go away. It seems so heartless, when all these little babies and gasping mothers are left behind. Oh! dear, life is so full of problems that I stagger under them. How can such things be? Where is the justice and the love?

. . . . . .

It was a sight for weary eyes last night when J. and C. and K. all came in to dinner—these splendid youth—the *bulwark* of our land. It set me to dreaming indeed—to think that the life which we (E. and I) were just ending lay all before them. They had so much time and opportunity and strength. I felt like shouting at them—Oh, boys—boys—do, do the thousand things that you will wish you had done when you can't any more. Lucky that I could n't, and they, poor lambs! need n't be frightened out of their common sense by an old lady's exaggerations.

STOCKBRIDGE, MASS., July, 1900.

I wish there were another Huxley or Max Muller to read. But it does seem to me that there is very little *new* that is worth while. However, I am going to take up Zola's last three works, which I think must be very fine. If I were beginning my life again, I should take up some humble little scientific chapter and go into that very earnestly and thoroughly. It is too late now, but I can see where I missed.

The collect of Newman's[1] is very lovely. I have long known and loved it. But someway I don't fell as though I had any right to ask for "*rest*" very much after "my work is done." I 'm not doing any work, that is the whole trouble. I should like a great deal of work to do, a great deal of strength with which to do it —and certain knowledge that it must keep on— in a new life. There is so little that seems to me to be worth while.

THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION, Feb. 10, 1901.

This is very presumptuous, and yet I am so strongly prompted to write it, and as I have no idea where to send it—as you are floating anywhere around Princeton in an atmosphere of ideas and ideals, where probably no gross ma-

[1] The Lord support thee all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and thy work is done. Then in His mercy, may He grant thee a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last.

terial stuff can find you out—it may just relieve my mind and not intrude into your lofty regions at all—at all. So it won't do any harm. And first do let me hasten to disclaim any presumption on our part that we could begin to understand even the titles "of your honored husband's lectures." We knew all the words except "epistemological," and that we studied yesterday afternoon, until I think we could even introduce it casually into conversation, but we know that that by no means argues sufficient familiarity with their contents to enable us to follow when they are used rapidly and argumentatively—and so perhaps you were wise and kind to head us off in our foolish attempt to hang on to the outside edge as it were of your charmed circle. Still, it has been a great disappointment. We had fancied you as stopping at the Inn, and we thought it would be such fun to visit together there, where we should feel that no one was being inconvenienced by our visiting, or having any responsibility about anything. But of course if you were to be visiting that could n't have been—and so since we could n't visit you at home, or at the Inn, nor be admitted to the lectures or understand even the titles, if we were admitted—why, there is nothing left for us but to stop at home and try to be contented with our ignorance; or at least happy in spite of our ignorance.

As for your not coming to see us because we have n't been to see you, I fail to see the force

of the argument. I should have said it would have worked just the other way. If you wanted to see me and I could n't go to you, I should think it an additional reason for your coming to see me. But maybe that is not sufficiently epistemological for you (really a very easy word to spell and to use—I wonder how I have gotten along so many years without it). Are you sure that the reason why you won't come is because you are a little afraid of our Æolipile? Though after all you must know all about that, as it comes a great many pages before epistemological in the dictionary. No, on the whole, I can't understand your reasoning, even on matters of everyday life, so it is fortunate that I am not attempting higher flights.

We are all as usual. Everett leading a strenuous life. I eating and sleeping well—with which noble performance of duty my daily chronicle begins and ends. Would E. and I represent "two types of naturalism"?

No indeed. I won't join your society. Not I. I like long words, and only wish I knew more of them, and if you make a short or rather monosyllabic society, I shall form a poly-ditto, and have your husband for our president. It would take twenty syllables to express the tangle that my mind is in now. Everything is such a puzzle.

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I went down town in a Madison Avenue car this morning—a crowded car—and I looked at

every one that got into the car, and wondered if she, he, or it had a soul, and if I could be made to love it. "Doubtless the soul is immortal, when a soul can be discerned." I wonder if you can love a soul just because you are pretty sure it is there, though you can't discern one—and you mostly can't discern them. Is n't it so? But P. B. seemed to love even hypothetical souls, and I wonder how he did it.

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Monday afternoon, April 21, 1901.

"A happy soul that all the way to Heaven hath a summer's day." Why should he want any Heaven?—a real summer's day—all leafy and green and shady—with blue sky outside, and violets and rest inside the shade, and the people you love and no things—why that 's enough for any one. Is it or is n't it? What is the French proverb? "On se lasse de tout excepté de comprendre." There is a good deal in that—after all—to struggle and fight and fail and then succeed—just the storm and stress and then victory—that is life and it makes wrinkles—nay—it ploughs furrows—"It delves parallels on Beauty's brow—" and pales the roses and dims the spirit. But it is the nobler—it is the difference between the child and the man.

SHARON, CONN., July, 1901.

I wonder if you had n't been studying up those *darned* mosquitoes, if they would have hurt you. You know too much, and there is a

sure disposition in your germs that will be absent from ours, who are ignorant of their deadly power. I wonder if all this germ business ought n't to be coupled with a lot of mind healing, etc., etc. In short, if I were a Christian Scientist, I should make great capital over the coincidence of your newly acquired knowledge and your attack.

. . . . . .

Of course the little maid got ill when you did —poor thing—and maybe it was better so. If we can only weather it, I would rather have everything come at once, then have a respite, and a well-earned jollification, than to have everything string along forever. I wonder how it agrees with Mr. G.'s lectures? But then what is the use of lectures! Though I don't, with our recent Chinese experiences, I don't seem to love barbarism. But I have just finished—with a great deal of judicious skipping—James' *Psychology*. Of course I skipped all the physiology, and took his processes for granted—going in for results and illustrations. It was vastly amusing—but it does n't make living much easier. The chapter on habits was startling, but knowing things is n't believing them—I believe (do I believe anything consciously?) that it takes several generations of knowledge to bring about conviction.

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Besides James, we, i. e., Ethel and I, are reading the *Romance of Isabel, Lady Barten*,

and find it very freshening and invigorating, you have read it no doubt, but if you have n't *do*. On the whole, "Lives pay"—real ones truthfully told—one loses one's self in them, which is the best sort of mind cure—though nothing is so good as Dumas—notably *The Three Guardsmen*. Then to get me sanefully through the horrors of our daily news, I am learning Arnold's poem on *The Future*. It is fresh and bold and hopeful as a bugle call, and I learn a verse of it daily as an antidote to summer woes—I think I shall take up Solomon's prayer next. Do you remember how fine it is?

731 Park Avenue,
May 31, 1897.

My dear Mrs. B.:

This is just a short tea call — the running in that I would do if you were next door—to tell you what a really lovely time I had yesterday, and how refreshed and brightened up—"uplifted," as we say at the Wednesday Club—I was by it.

It was so good of you to ask me when it was only such a choice few that were asked! I am getting so bad about lots of people—and I do enjoy more and more just two or three who are "all nice," as we were yesterday.

I 'm quite sad about myself because I feel that I am growing too serious as I grow old and I would so much rather be gay—and it was so gay yesterday.

Such a pretty house and so new and sweet

and so nice in the Florentine room with the Venus and the Dante—to find that after all the daintiest bit of decoration was the precious bit from New England in the old oak chair—and then to renew one's youth—one's sweet, silly youth—in those dear old songs. Did you mention "she stood beside the altar" and "I saw her cheek was pale"? That was so deliciously heartrending — but I can't remember if it was "in the list."

Do you know I 'm tempted to answer that essay of songs and write up the tender sentiment—yes, and the stern virtue of all those songs—no girl who sang them daily to the light guitar could have ever contemplated seriously a mercenary marriage. Good-bye, now, for I must be off (approaching the edge of my paper).

Do enjoy your lovely house to the utmost and don't put any hangings, and don't polish up the floors too much. Keep a close eye on Venus and Dante and remember me always as your most appreciative friend,

LYDIA L. WHEELER.

731 PARK AVENUE,
May 26, 1899.

MY DEAR MRS. B.:

I had such sweet dreams last night—all along of the moving leaves and the sparkling water—and the big blue over our heads and all around us—yesterday—and I could not keep my eyes open till bedtime — but slipped into bed at early candle-light—to think all about the good

time I had had, and to make fitting answers to all your unanswerables of yesterday. But, after all, I did n't try, but contented myself with thinking all about you two dear sisters—and how glad I was that *we* were a triangle—tho' it is of course an isosceles and I 'm but the little small base.

Well! thank you my dear friend for all the pleasure you have given me—and please accept the little book with my love. It is n't as fine as *John Inglesant*, which I call absolutely—no, one —but—I love it for its sweet pictures of sleepy English life—and its mysticism. Don't keep it for summer but read it quick—to-night—and do give up all those dreadful clubs and things—they are killing you, and it keeps me awake and groaning to think of it.

I 'm looking for my leaf from your back-yard, and am always forever triangularly and quadrilaterally yours,

LYDIA L. W.